

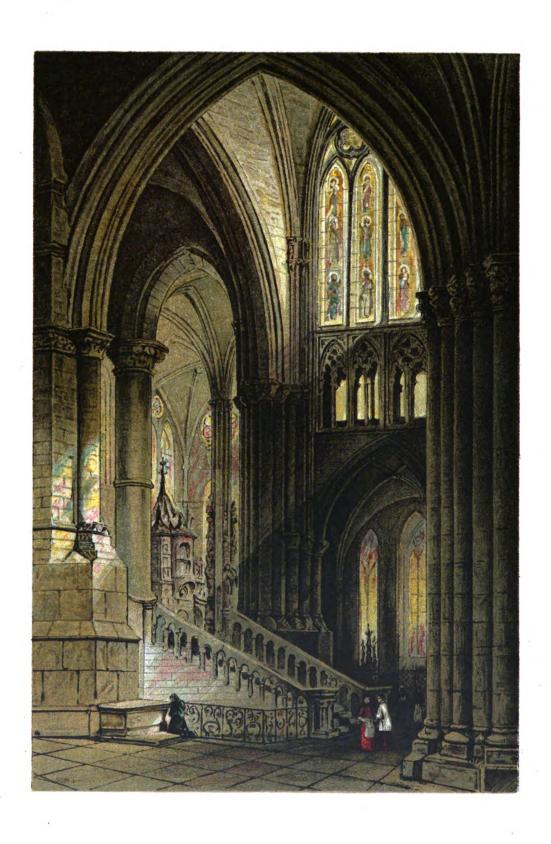
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NEW — REVISED — ENLARGED

Mackey's

History of Freemasonry

BY

ROBERT INGHAM CLEGG, 83°

WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MANY EMINENT AUTHORITIES INCLUDING

WILLIAM JAMES HUGHAN

PAST SENIOR GRAND DEACON, GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND;
PAST SENIOR GRAND WARDEN, EGYPT;
PAST SENIOR GRAND WARDEN, IOWA, ETC.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

The Gospel according to SAINT JOHN, VIII: 32

Without knowledge there can be no sure progress.

CHARLES SUMMER

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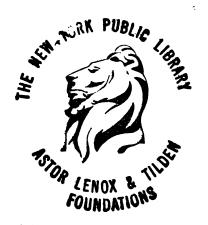
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CHAPTER FIFTY-SEVEN

EARLY FREEMASONRY IN SCOTLAND



HAT the tradition of York is to the Freemasons of England, that of Kilwinning is to the brethren of Scotland. The story tracing the birth of the Order to the noted Abbey of Kilwinning was for many years accepted as the reliable history of Scottish Freemasonry.

Thus Sir John Sinclair, in his Statistical

Account of Scotland, states that "a number of Freemasons came from the continent to build a monastery at Kilwinning and with them an architect or Master Mason to superintend and carry on the work. This architect resided at Kilwinning, and being a gude and true Mason, intimately acquainted with all the arts and parts of Masonry, known on the continent, was chosen Master of the meetings of the brethren all over Scotland. He gave rules for the conduct of the brethren at these meetings, and decided finally in appeals from all the other meetings or lodges in Scotland." 1

This tradition has been accepted by the author of Laurie's History, who says that "Freemasonry was introduced into Scotland by those architects who built the Abbey of Kilwinning." He connects those architects with a trading association of artists who were engaged in the construction of religious buildings on the Continent, under the patronage of the Pope, and who provided builders for both England and Scotland. This author suggests as an evidence that Freemasonry was introduced into Scotland by these foreign workmen the fact that in a town in Scotland where there is a beautiful and famous abbey, he had "often heard that it was erected by a company of industrious men who spoke in a foreign language and lived separately from the town's people."

1 Vol. xi, see article on "Kilwinning."

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² "History of Freemasonry," p. 89.

The Abbey of Kilwinning, which has been claimed as the birthplace of Freemasonry in Scotland, was in the town of the same name, and in the county of Ayr, about twenty-five miles from Glasgow, on the southwestern coast of Scotland. It was founded by Hugh de Morville, High Constable of Scotland, in the year 1146. The abbey is now and has long been in ruins, though what remains of it proves, says Robert Wylie, who has written a History of the Mother Lodge, Kilwinning, "the zeal and opulence of its founder, and furnishes indubitable evidence, fragmentary as it is, of its having been one of the most splendid examples of Gothic art in Scotland."

Only very recently is it that anyone has attempted to deny the authenticity of the Legend which traces the introduction of Freemasonry into Scotland to the workmen who came over in the 12th century to build the Abbey of Kilwinning.

Brother D. Murray Lyon has attacked the tradition, together with some others connected with Scottish Freemasonry, all of which he believes to be without historical support.

The tradition, however, like that of York among the English Freemasons, has not wanted its zealous supporters among the Scottish brethren, and more especially among the members of the lodge at Kilwinning, which claims to have a legitimate descent from the pioneer lodge founded in the 12th century by the foreign architect who settled in that town.

However, there has been an attempt to trace the introduction of the Order into Scotland to a much earlier period. One writer, cited by Wylie, with apparent approval, says that Scotland can boast of many noble remains of the ancient buildings which plainly show that the Romans when they entered the country brought along with them some of their best designers and operative masons, who were employed in rearing those noble fabrics of which we can at this day trace the remains. The assertion is made that these Roman builders taught to the natives and left behind them a respect and a knowledge of Freemasonry which have descended from them to the present generation.¹

Probably more is here claimed than can be proved by history. The influence exerted upon English architecture by the Roman colleges of Freemasons is very clear, as has been already shown.

¹ Wylie, "History of the Mother Lodge, Kilwinning," p. 47.



The Romans had been able to make for centuries a home in England, had introduced into it their arts of civilization, and made it in every respect a colony.

But Scotland had never been completely taken over by the Romans; the visits of the legions were altogether of a fighting nature, nor are there many evidences from their remains that the Roman artists had been able to make, or had even attempted to make, the same impression on the warlike Scots and Picts that they had produced on the more easily controlled peoples of the southern part of the island.

The theory crediting the introduction of Freemasonry to Scotland to the workmen who came over from England or from the Continent in the 12th century, and erected the religious buildings at Kilwinning, Melrose, Glasgow, and other places, is a much more likely one. Bodies of Traveling Freemasons were at that time in existence, and we know that they were going about the Continent and erecting buildings for the Church. We know too that at that period there were corporations or gilds of Freemasons in England. A very fair inference from historical reasoning, though there be no written records to confirm it, is that the churches and abbeys erected in Scotland during the 12th and 13th centurier must have been the work of Freemasons who came from England and from the Continent.

Brother D. Murray Lyon, the Historian of the Lodge of Edinburgh, has said that "not the slightest vestige of authentic evidence has ever been adduced in support of the legends in regard to the time and place of the institution of the first Scotch Masonic Lodge." This is, however, a merely local question affecting various claims to position on the roll of the Grand Lodge, and must not be mixed up with the question of the introduction of the Freemasons into Scotland as an organized society of builders. Brother Mackey believed this event could be credited to the time when church buildings were patronized by King David I., which was toward the close of the 11th and the beginning of the 12th century.

The Mother Kilwinning Lodge, at Kilwinning, the St. Mary's Chapel Lodge, at Edinburgh, and the Freemen St. John's, at Glasgow, have each preferred the claim that it is the oldest lodge

1"History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 2.



in Scotland. Each has its proofs and each has its followers, and the dispute has at times waxed warm among the Scottish Freemasons. However, as a matter of general history that is of minor importance.

The reader has seen that we are almost compelled to suppose that the institution of Freemasonry was introduced to Scotland by the builders who were engaged in the erection of religious houses from the 11th to the 13th centuries. Brother Mackey could not get over the belief that these builders formed part of a fraternity which already existed in the Continent of Europe and in England, and was then engaged in the same occupation of constructing cathedrals and monasteries.

We need not at this stage go at length into the matter of the various points leading to the conclusion that there was a unity of mind that caused these remarkable buildings to have the impress of closely related designs. Such an effect might be due to the labors of a single force or company of Freemasons or it might be the result of some one superintending source of authority outside and beyond any organization of that kind. A thorough study of the situation not only calls for a critical examination of early building, but of the relations and work of the Freemasons, the Benedictines, and similar organizations.

Knowing from other evidence what were the customs of these Traveling Freemasons, and that wherever they were engaged in the labors of their Craft they established lodges, we are again forced to the belief that in Scotland they followed the practice they had adopted elsewhere, and erected their lodges there also.

Doubtless there is no authentic evidence that the modern lodges at Glasgow, at Kilwinning, and at Edinburgh are the true successors of those established by the Freemasons who were engaged in the construction of the Cathedral, the Abbey, and Holyrood; indeed it is very probable that they are not. Nor is there any historical material which will enable us to determine which of these lodges was first established by the mediæval builders. The probability is, as Brother Lyon has suggested, that the erection of the earlier Scottish lodges was at nearly the same date, as wherever a body of mediæval Freemasons were employed there also were the elements to constitute a lodge.¹

1 "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 242.



The facts, therefore, would appear to be that lodges must have existed in Scotland from the time when those buildings were being erected, and that any Freemasons who came over from the Continent to erect those structures brought with them the Freemasonry of overseas. We can not prove these facts by historical records of absolutely orthodox type, but we can see no reason for denying or doubting their likelihood.

Crediting the introduction of Freemasonry into Scotland to the Continental Freemasons, we have some evidence that at a later period there was a considerable influence exercised by England on Scottish Freemasonry. This is apparent from the fact that the Constitutions used in the Kilwinning Lodge, and therefore used in other Masonic bodies founded by it in the middle of the 17th century, and known as the "Edinburgh Kilwinning MS.," is a nearly exact copy of an English manuscript, and contains a charge to be "liegemen to the King of England, without treason or other falsehood."

This manuscript, kept in the archives of the Kilwinning Lodge, and known, says Lyon, as "the old Buck," was often copied. These copies were sold by the Lodge of Kilwinning to lodges which had received charters from it.

The fact that these Constitutions require loyalty to the King of England, that the legend which refers to the introduction of Freemasonry into England, and its later growth, dwells on the favor extended to the Craft by the English Kings, and finally that the account contains no allusion to the Kilwinning or another Scottish legend, induce Brothers Hughan and Lyon to come to the conclusion that the manuscript was brought from England into Scotland. They further agree that its adoption by the Kilwinning Lodge, and by those chartered by the latter body, proves that the Freemasonry of England exercised in the middle of the 17th century a very great influence over that of Scotland. This influence, as it will be seen, was still further exerted in after times digesting the rituals and ceremonial customs of the two countries.

This English influence on Scotch lodges at so early a period is a fact of great importance in the history of Freemasonry. From it is to be presumed that there was a close intimacy and frequent communication between the Freemasons of the two countries.



We may also fairly assume that there was a marked similarity—indeed, in many respects, an identity—of practices in Scotland and England. Therefore we may with great safety apply what we know of the Freemasonry of one country to that of another, where we have no other knowledge but that which is derived from such a comparison.

Now, it is well known that while the literature of English Freemasonry is sadly wanting in authentic records of lodges which existed prior to the Revival of 1717, the Scottish lodges have preserved original minutes or records of their proceedings as far back as the end of the 16th century.

Brother Lyon, in his History of the Lodge of Edinburgh, has torn away, with an unsparing hand, the misfitting garments which the imaginations of Anderson and Brewster (Laurie's edition) had cast around the statue of Scottish Masonic history. It will not be safe in writing such a history to lose sight of the cleancut criticism of Lyon and trust to the faulty and misleading claims of earlier historians.

We are told that at the beginning of the 12th century, Freemasons had been imported into Scotland from Strassburg, Germany, for the purpose of building Holyrood House; and that in the middle of the same century other Freemasons were engaged in erecting Kilwinning Abbey. From these times historians have been inclined to date the origin of Scottish Freemasonry. We have no documents referring to that early period, but we learn that King David I., who then reigned, was what Anderson would call a "great patron of Masonry," and that he nearly beggared the kingdom by the freedom with which he invested its resources in the construction of religious buildings.

But it is not until we reach the commencement of the 15th century that we begin to find any records which seem to indicate the existence of a craft or gild like that which we know at the same time existed in England. We do not assert here that there were no lodges or gild meetings in the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries. Judging from the condition of things in England at that time, we may conclude that gilds or lodges of Freemasons were in existence also in Scotland, but we have no documentary evidence of any authentic value to sustain the belief.



The first period in which Freemasonry in Scotland begins to assume a historic form is at the commencement of the 15th century.

James I. had really been a prisoner in England from the year 1406 to 1424. During those eighteen years of his enforced absence, the kingdom had been greatly harassed by the fights of what were called "leagues" or "bands" among the craftsmen of the different trades, including the Freemasons, and which might be compared to the modern trades-unions and to strikes.

James I. returned to Scotland in 1424. He at once began to correct the abuses which had resulted from these unlawful bodies. He crushed the "leagues," and instituted the office of "Deacon" or "Master-man," as a method of protecting the community from any frauds that might creep in among the crafts. For this purpose the "Deacons" were authorized, by act of Parliament, to regulate the works of all the crafts, to establish the rate of wages, and to punish any who should offend against the law.

But these powers were found to be in many instances a burden on the people and an attack upon the privileges of the town and city authorities. They were, after a year's trial, set aside, and a new class of officials was instituted, called "Wardens," one of whom was selected from each trade. These Wardens were not the representatives of the crafts, but were closely related to the town-councils of each burgh, whose rights they exercised in regulating work and wages.

Now the Freemasons who originally came to Scotland in the 12th century from the Continent and from England had enjoyed the privilege from the Pope of regulating their own concerns and even of arranging their own wages. This privilege they must of course have given to their successors in Scotland, and it was there apparently exercised, up to and including the time of the institution of Deacons, under whom the trade and craft unions used the same right of action.

But when that Deaconship was abolished, and Wardens established as representatives of the municipal authorities, this right of regulating their own concerns was taken from the craft. To this there was naturally resistance. Brother Lyon tells us that "the Deacons continued holding meetings of their respective crafts, for the purpose doubtless of keeping alive the embers of discon-



tent at their degraded position and organizing the means for carrying on the struggle, not only to regain independence of action in trade affairs but also to acquire a political status in the country." ¹

There is nothing in the history of the reigns of the two succeeding kings, James II. and III., that connects them with the Masonic fraternity. None of the acts of the Scottish Parliament, during these two reigns, has any special reference to the Craft of Freemasons. James III. is said to have had "a passionate attachment for magnificent buildings." "Beyond this," says Brother Lyon, "his name can not in any special degree be associated with Masons." But in truth, though documentary evidence of particular facts may be wanting, this tendency to the erection of fine buildings must have led the king to bestow his favor upon that fraternity whose duty it was to put them up.

Brewster (Laurie's edition) has sought to give an importance to the reign of James II., by claiming that that king had invested the Earl of Orkney and Caithness with the dignity of "Grand Master" of the Freemasons of Scotland, and later on he made the office succeed to his heirs and successors in the barony of Roslin. This statement, long accepted by Masonic writers and by all the Freemasons of Scotland as a fact, has been proved by more recent researches to be unsupported by historic evidence and even to be contradicted by those trustworthy documents which are known as the "St. Clair Charters."

There are two Charters bearing this name. They were once the property of Alexander Deuchar, and were purchased at the sale of his library by Dr. David Laing of the Signet Library, and exchanged by him for other documents with Professor Aytoun of the University of Edinburgh, who presented them to the Grand Lodge of Scotland, in whose archives they are still preserved. The manuscripts have been carefully examined, and their authenticity is beyond doubt.

The date of the first of these manuscripts is not given, but from internal and other evidence it seems fair to assume that it was written in the year 1600 or 1601. It is signed by William Schaw as "Master of Work" and by several Freemasons of Edinburgh and various towns in Scotland.



¹ "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 3.

The manuscript begins by stating that the Lords of Roslin have from "age to age" been patrons and protectors of the Freemasons of Scotland and of their privileges, and as such have been acknowledged and obeyed. That within a few years past this position has from sloth and negligence been allowed to go out of use, whereby the Lord of Roslin has been lying out of his just rights and the Craft been without a patron and protector, and other evils have arisen; wherefore it goes on to say that, not being able to wait on the tedious and costly courses of the ordinary courts, the signers, in behalf of all the Craft and with their consent, agree that William Sinclair of Roslin and his heirs shall obtain at the hands of the King, liberty, freedom, and jurisdiction upon them and their successors, in all times to come, so that he shall be acknowledged by the Craft as their patron and judge under the King.

The second charter, which claims to be issued by the Deacons, Masters, and Freemen of the Masons and Hammermen of Scotland, is supposed by Lyon, with good reason, to have been written in the year 1628.

This document is confirmatory of the other, making the same statement of the recognition of the Sinclairs of Roslin as patrons and protectors of the Scottish Craft, but adding an additional fact, which will hereafter be considered.

Upon this authority Brewster has said, in Laurie's *History*, that King James II. had granted to William St. Clair, Earl of Orkney and Caithness, Baron of Roslin, the office of Grand Master, and made it hereditary to his heirs and successors in the barony of Roslin; and he adds that "the Barons of Roslyn, as hereditary Grand Masters of Scotland, held their principal annual meetings at Kilwinning."

Anderson had previously asserted that James I. had instituted the office of Grand Master, who was to be chosen by the Grand Lodge, and this, he says, "is the tradition of the old Scottish Masons and found in their records."

The language of Anderson shows that he was not acquainted with the St. Clair Charters, as they are called. If he had seen



them it is not likely that he would have omitted to take notice of the important point of hereditary occupation. But the authority of Anderson as a reliable historian is of so little value that we need not discuss the question whether any such tradition ever existed.

The statement made in Laurie's *History* is, however, professedly based on the authority of the St. Clair Charters. This statement has been criticised by James Maidment in his *Genealogie of the Saint Clairs of Rosslyn*, by Lyon in his *History of the Lodge of Edinburgh*, and by several other writers.

The statement made in Laurie's work depends for its truth or its fallacy on the question whether these charters have been faithfully and correctly explained or not. Therefore it will be necessary in making the issue to study more particularly the exact language which is used in these documents.

The words of the first charter, rewritten into the common tongue from the Scottish dialect of the original, are as follows:

"We, Deacons, Masters, and Freemen of the Masons within the realm of Scotland, with express consent and assent of William Schaw, Master of Work to our Sovereign Lord, forasmuch as from age to age it has been observed among us that the Lords of Roslin have ever been patrons and protectors of us and our privileges, likewise our predecessors have obeyed and acknowledged them as patrons and protectors, while through negligence and sloth the same has past out of use. . . . We, for ourselves and in the name of all our brethren and craftsmen, consent to the aforesaid agreement and consent that William St. Clair, now of Roslin, for himself and his heirs, shall purchase and obtain, at the hands of our Sovereign Lord, liberty, freedom, and jurisdiction upon us and our successors, in all times coming, as patrons and judges to us and all the professors of our craft within this realm, . . . so that hereafter we may acknowledge him and his heirs as our patron and judge under our Sovereign Lord, without appeal or declination from his judgment, and with power to the said William to deputize one or more judges under him, and to use such ample and large jurisdiction upon us and our successors, in town and in country, as it shall please our Sovereign Lord to grant to him and his heirs."

The second charter is but a repetition of the statements of the first, with a few additional details which make it a longer docu-



ment. It approves and confirms the former "letter of jurisdiction and liberty made and subscribed by our brethren and his highness, formerly Master of Work for the time to the said William St. Clair of Roslin."

There is, however, one statement not to be found in the first charter, and which is of much importance. It is stated that the St. Clairs of Roslin had letters of protection and of other rights which were "granted to them by his majesty's most noble progenitors of worthy memory, which, with sundry others of the Lord of Roslin's writings, were consumed and burnt in a flame of fire within the castle of Roslin in an . . . "

The last two words are "in an," evidently meaning "in anno" (in the year), but being at the end of the line, the two last letters with the date may have been torn from or worn off the manuscript. We can from this only gather the fact that there was a tradition among the Scottish Freemasons that some one of the Kings of Scotland, previous to James VI., in whose reign the manuscript was undoubtedly written, had by letters patent granted to the Lords of Roslin the official patronage and protection of the Craft in that country.

We see that Brewster had no authority from these charters to make the statement that James II. had appointed the Barons of Roslin hereditary Grand Masters of Scotland. There is not the remotest allusion in either of these documents to the use of such a title. One of William Schaw's titles was "Chief Master of Masons," but that of "Grand Master" was never recognized in Scotland until one was elected in 1731 by the Grand Lodge of Edinburgh.

But the charters do not declare that the Sinclairs of Roslin had received any such appointment from the King. True, the second charter does refer to letters of protection granted by the predecessors of James VI. These letters were burnt in a fire at Roslin Castle at a time the date of which has been lost.

We may well ask why was the fact of the burning of these papers not stated in the first charter; how is it that there is no certain knowledge of the year when this fire took place; and how was

¹ Brother Lyon objects to the opinion that Schaw was an Operative Mason and thinks that he was of higher social position and merely an honorary member of the Craft. If there were no other evidence to sustain Brother Lyon in this view, the fact that the title of "highness," as here applied to him, would be sufficient to prove its accuracy.



it that while all the other charters belonging to the house of Roslyn were preserved these alone were consumed by this fatal fire?

When the last Roslin resigned in the year 1736 his inherited rights as patron, he certainly did allude to the possibility that some King of Scotland may have granted a charter to his predecessors. But he expressly names those predecessors as William St. Clair and his son, Sir William, the very persons mentioned in the two charters as deriving their rights from the Freemasons in the beginning of the 17th century. But there is no evidence in his letter of resignation that he knew of any charter granted by James II. to the Earls of Orkney and Barons of Roslin.

Brother Mackey, on a critical review of the foregoing facts, felt that we may explain this story of the St. Clair Charters as follows:

At the beginning of the 17th century there was possibly a tradition, unsupported, however, by historical evidence, that from father to son the St. Clairs of Roslin had inherited the right to continue as patrons and protectors of the Craft of Freemasons in Scotland. But in the year 1601, when William Schaw was the "Chief Mason" and "Master of the Work," the St. Clairs, if they had ever exercised their patronage and protection, had ceased to do so.

The Freemasons needing at that time such a patron, named William St. Clair as such, and to give a greater prestige to the position, either invented a tradition that the office had been hereditary in the family of the St. Clairs or repeated one that already existed.

About thirty years afterwards the Freemasons of Scotland renewed the appointment of Sir William St. Clair, the son of the one who had received the appointment in 1601. Brother Mackey says that now, in accordance with the unhappy method of treating Masonic documents which seems always to have prevailed whenever it was necessary to make a point, the writers of the second charter changed the tradition which in the first charter was to the effect that the Freemasons had always appointed the St. Clairs as their patrons, and asserted that the appointment had been given at an early period by one of the Scottish Kings. He adds that this was a falsification of the original tradition and must be rejected.



The claim was, however, accepted by Sir David Brewster and has until comparatively recent times been recognized as a part of the authentic history of Scottish Freemasonry.

Brother Mackey held that there can be no doubt that the St. Clairs accepted the honorable position of patrons of Scotch Freemasonry which had been bestowed upon them in 1601 and retained the office until it was finally vacated in 1736 by William St. Clair, who resigned all claim or pretense that he had any inherited right to be "patron, protector, judge or Master of the Masons in Scotland." Upon this the Grand Lodge of Scotland, which had then been duly formed, first adopted for their presiding officer, under the influence of the example of the Grand Lodge of England, the title of "Grand Master" and elected St. Clair to the office.

Looking back to the 12th century, when Kilwinning Abbey, Glasgow Cathedral, and Holyrood and other religious houses were built by Freemasons brought over from England and from the Continent, we are to suppose, for we are without documentary information, that the Freemasons of that and the succeeding centuries up to the end of the 16th century must have observed the customs of the English and Continental Craftsmen.

During the reigns of James IV. and V., the statutes of Parliament show that there were endless disputes between the Freemasons and the public authorities, the former seeking to enlarge their privileges and the latter to restrict them. When Mary ascended the throne she found the Freemasons suffering under an act passed during the regency which suppressed the Deaconry. This law with previous ones that forbid their meetings in "private conventions" or framing statutes, seemed to have deprived the Freemasons of almost all their liberties.

Queen Mary abolished all these laws. She granted letters under the Great Seal, which restored the office of Deacon, confirmed the Craft in the privilege of self-government, in the observance of the customs and the exercise of the rights they had formerly enjoyed.¹

In the reign of James VI. we find a recognized connection between the Sovereign and the Craft, the office of Warden and that of Master of the Works being made by the King's authority.

¹ Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 5.



At this period we begin to find reliable records or minutes of lodges and statutes that are trustworthy, by which we are enabled to form a correct judgment of the condition and the customs of the Craft in Scotland at that early time.

In this respect Scotland has the advantage of England, where we find no authentic records of any lodge until the 17th century, while the first minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh date back to the year 1598.¹

Some analysis of the early minutes of the Scottish lodges, and especially of the Lodge of Edinburgh, has been given by Bro. D. Murray Lyon in his valuable history of that body. Whoever expects to write a faithful history of Freemasonry in Scotland must depend on that work as almost the only source of authentic facts. As histories of the early period the claims of Anderson, and of Lawrie's edition, are almost utterly valueless.

The minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh, or St. Mary's Chapel, extend from December 28, 1598, to November 29, 1869. They are in six volumes, all in an excellent state of preservation, with comparatively very few omissions. The first and second volumes, which bridge the space of one hundred and sixty-three years, that is, from 1598 to 1761, with a gap of only thirteen years, supply an ample store of reliable materials for early Scotch Masonic history.

The first volume contains a copy of what are called "The Schaw Statutes," the earliest Constitutions that exist of Scotch Freemasonry. The date of this document is December 28, 1598. The laws it records are entitled "The Statutes and Ordinances to be observed by all the Master Masons within this realm; set down by William Schaw, Master of Work to his Majesty and General Warden of the said Craft with the consent of the Masters hereafter specified." ²

Of these statutes, the most important for understanding the true condition and customs of the Masonic Craft of Scotland in the 17th century are the following:



¹ Just what constitutes the really reliable records of a lodge may be a fair question for dispute, but we are of the opinion that the undoubted testimony of Ashmole shows that in 1646 and 1682 the Craft met in organized bodies for ritualistic purposes.

² In quoting from these statutes, from the minutes of lodges or from any other documents, for the convenience of the English reader, the Scottish dialect of the original words has been put into the common tongue but with every care to preserve the exact meaning.

The first point intimates that the laws that were then laid down are but a continuation of those which had been in use before that time, but of these no copy is in existence.

The second point requires the Craftsmen "to be true to one another, and to live charitably together." This is in exact accord with the gild spirit, to be found in all the old English Constitutions.

The third rule requires obedience "to their Wardens, Deacons, and Masters in all things concerning their Craft."

The fourth directs them to be honest, faithful, and diligent, and to deal uprightly with the Masters or owners of the work in whatsoever they shall take in hand. This point reads like a copy from the English Constitutions.

The fifth point says that no one shall take in hand any work which he is not able to do properly. This is the same as the rule in the English Constitution, but the Schaw Statutes direct the penalty that is to be paid for breaking the rule.

The sixth provides that no Master shall take another's work from him, after the latter has made a contract with the owner of the work (who in the English Constitutions is called "the lord"), under a penalty of forty pounds.

The seventh point is that none shall finish any work begun and not completed by another, until the latter has received his pay for what he has done.

The eighth point provides for the election by the Masters of every lodge of a Warden, to take charge of the lodge, whose election is to be approved by the Warden-General.

The ninth point directs that no Master shall take more than three apprentices unless with the consent of the Wardens, Deacons, and Masters of the sheriffalty (district) where the apprentice dwells.

The tenth point is that no apprentice shall be taken for less than seven years, nor shall that apprentice be made a brother and Fellow of the Craft until he has served seven years more after the expiration of his term of apprenticeship, unless by the special license of the Wardens, Deacons, and Masters assembled for that purpose, nor without a sufficient trial of his worthiness, qualifications, and skill.

The eleventh point made it unlawful for a Master to sell his apprentice to any other Master or to dispense with the years of



his apprenticeship by selling them to the apprentice himself. The apprentice was to serve the full term with his first Master.

By the twelfth point the Master, when he received an apprentice, was to notify the fact to the Warden of the lodge, so that his name and the day of his reception might be properly enrolled in the book of the lodge.

The thirteenth point prescribed that the names of the apprentices should be enrolled in the order of the time of their reception.

By the fourteenth point a Master or Fellow was to be received or admitted only in the presence of six Masters and two Entered Apprentices, the Warden of the lodge being one of the six; the time of the reception and the name and mark of the Master or Fellow were to be enrolled in the lodge book, together with the names of the six Masters and two apprentices who received him and the names of the "intendars" or persons chosen to give him instruction. Nor was he to be admitted without an "assay" or specimen of his work and a sufficient trial of his skill and worthiness.

The fifteenth point required that no Master was to do any work under the charge or command of any other Craftsman.

The sixteenth strictly forbade the doing of any work with cowans.1

The seventeenth point ordered that an apprentice was not to accept any work beyond a certain amount without the license of the Masters or Warden.

By the eighteenth all disputes were to be referred for adjustment to the Wardens or Deacons of the lodge.

The nineteenth provided for the careful erection of scaffolds and footways so as to prevent any danger or injury to the workmen.

By the twentieth apprentices who had run away from their Masters were not to be received or employed by other Masters.

The twenty-first commanded all the Craftsmen to come to a meeting when duly warned of the time and place.

The twenty-second point required all Masters who were summoned to the Assembly to swear under "a great oath" not to

¹ Dr. Murray's "New English Dictionary" defines this word to mean "One who builds dry stone walls — applied derogatorily to one who does the work of a mason, but has not been regularly apprenticed or bred to the trade. Hence one uninitiated in the secrets of Freemasonry. In 1707 Mother Kilwinning Lodge defined the Cowan as a Mason without the Word."



conceal the wrongs or faults done to each other nor to the owners of the works on which they were employed.

The twenty-third and last point prescribed that all the fines and penalties inflicted for any breach of these rules should be collected by the Wardens, Deacons, and Masters of the lodges and spent according to their judgment for godly uses.

Brother Lyon very properly suggests that this code of laws was applicable only to working masons. This is certainly true, but so also were all the Constitutions of the English Craft and the Ordinances of the German and French Freemasons. Originally Freemasonry was entirely an operative institution. Out of it grew the present Speculative System, in all these countries. To understand, then, the growth of the one out of the other, it is necessary to examine these Constitutions and the minutes of the Operative Lodges, of which Scotland only supplies us with authentic materials.

The great resemblance between the Statutes of Schaw and the early English Constitutions indicates very clearly the close connection that existed between the two bodies of Craftsmen in these countries. We are left in no doubt that both took their laws and their customs from a common source, namely, that body of architects and builders who sprang up out of the Roman Colleges of Artificers and in time passed over into the Traveling Freemasons, who spread their skill and the principles of their profession over all Europe and to its farthest islands.

We have thus traced the rise of Freemasonry in Scotland to the builders who came over in the 12th century from the Continent, and perhaps from England, to be employed in the construction of religious houses at Kilwinning, at Glasgow, at Edinburgh, and other places. Having shown the condition of the Craft, so far as the scarcity of materials would permit, between that period and the year 1598, when the Schaw Statutes were made law, we are next to inquire into the customs of the Scottish Craft in the 17th century and until the organization of the Speculative Grand Lodge of Scotland in the year 1736. In performing a similar task for the Freemasons of England, we were restricted for our sources of information to the manuscript Constitutions. These could supply us only with logical suggestions, which made our account more probable than certain.



But in tracing the course of the Scottish Craft in the 17th century, we are able to take as guides the minutes of Operative Lodges which, unlike those of England, have been preserved from the early date of the last years of the 16th century. These have been collected and published by Brother D. Murray Lyon in his most useful History of the Lodge of Edinburgh, a work which, in the following chapter, we shall freely draw upon for facts, though not always finding ourselves in agreement with the author's views. The facts seem beyond dispute. What we may infer from them may be in error. But we shall clearly separate known facts from mere opinions, no matter how well founded and cautious the latter are in appearance. Their acceptance must be left to the reader's judgment.

CHAPTER FIFTY-EIGHT

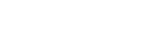
CUSTOMS OF THE SCOTTISH FREEMASONS IN THE 17TH CENTURY

HE Freemasons of the 16th century in Scotland appear to have been divided into two classes, the Incorporations and the Lodges. These, although not exactly like the Masons' Company and the lodges of England, may be considered as being of the same type.

In 1475 the Mayor and Town Council of Edinburgh chartered the Incorporation of Masons and Wrights.¹ In this body two Masons and two Wrights were selected and sworn to see that all work was properly done, to examine all new-comers into the town who were seeking employment, to make the necessary rules for the reception and government of Apprentices, to settle disputes between the Craftsmen, to bury the dead, and generally to make laws for the two trades of Masons and Wrights.

Incorporations were also invested in Glasgow and other cities with the same liberties. Disputes, repeatedly and naturally, arose between these Incorporations and the Lodges with whose privileges and regulations they sought to interfere. But early in the 17th century the former ceased to exercise some of their offensive prerogatives, and especially that of receiving and admitting Fellows of the Mason's Craft. However, as Brother Lyon justly observes, the fact that Wrights were present with Masons at the passing of Apprentices to the rank of Fellow, favors the opinion that the ceremony of passing was simply a testing of the candidate's fitness for employment as a journeyman.

But the Incorporations were really outside bodies having their origin in the city officials' spirit of control and interference.



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¹ Meaning "worker" and taken from the Anglo-Saxon. Little used today except in compound words such as shipwright, millwright, etc.

When studying the Masonic rules and customs of the 17th century we must look really to the lodges and to what is suggested or developed of them in the Schaw and other statutes, and in the early minutes of the lodges that have been preserved.

The assertion of Anderson, Preston, and other writers of the 18th century, as well as some of a later date, that there was from the earliest period a government of the Craft in England by a Grand Master has been proved to be wholly unsound. Something of the kind appears, however, to have been the case in Scotland at least from the end of the 16th century.

William Schaw, in his signature written at the foot of the Statutes enacted by him, and in various records going back as far as 1583, calls himself, and is called, "the King's Master of Work." This is a very common title in the Middle Ages, but by no means indicated that the possessor of it was a mason or a Freemason. The Magister Operis, or "Master of the Work," sometimes called the Magister Operum, or "Master of the Works," was an officer to whom was entrusted the oversight of the public works. Sometimes, but not necessarily, he was an architect; therefore, Anderson always calls these Masters of the Works, Grand Masters, an error which has a very unfortunate effect in confusing true Masonic history. The office was one of the Church as well, and in early times the monk who was made the Master of the Work superintended the workmen employed by the monastery in conducting repairs or erecting buildings.

We must not conclude that Schaw was, from being called by this title, an Operative Freemason. The evidence, though circumstantial, is really pointed the other way. Indeed, the office of King's Master of the Work was an old one in Scotland, and Schaw himself, in 1583, succeeded Sir Robert Drummond in the office.

But we find that in 1600, as it appears from a minute of the Lodge of Edinburgh, Schaw presided over a Masonic trial. To do this he must have been a member of the Craft. He was, therefore, it is to be supposed, a non-professional who was admitted to honorary membership, and he is only one instance among many of the adoption into the brotherhood of persons who were not actual stonecutters.

The reader must note that in that minute, Schaw is described as "the Principal Warden and Chief Master of Masons."



Now, this title of "Principal Warden" is the same as that called in the Statutes of 1599 the "Lord Warden-General." This office of Warden-General, or General Warden, as it is also called, approaches nearer to the idea of a Grand Master than anything that we can find in Anderson's *Constitutions* in respect to the English Freemasons.

The General Warden appears, according to the Scottish Statutes, to have been possessed of several important rights. He had the power of calling the representatives of the lodges to a General Assembly; he prepared and issued the statutes for the government of the Craft — the election of Wardens in the particular lodges was to be submitted to him for his approval — and he exercised a general oversight over all the lodges; in short, the General Warden was, in fact, though not in name, the Grand Master of the Freemasons in Scotland.

There is some confusion about the names of the officers of the private lodges. In some instances we find the presiding officer called the Deacon, and in others the Warden. But it has been explained that the Warden was recognized as the head of the lodge in its relations with the General Warden, while the Deacon was the chief of the Freemasons in their incorporated capacity and also the head of the lodge. Sometimes both offices were united in the same person, who was then called "the Deacon of the Masons and the Warden of the Lodge."

As a general rule, however, the Warden appears to have been the presiding officer of the lodge, the keeper of its funds, and the giver of its charities. That he held a position over the Deacon is evident from the fact that when both are spoken of in a minute or in a regulation, the Warden is named before the Deacon. It is always "the Warden and Deacon," and never "the Deacon and Warden."

Both officers were elected by the votes of the Master Masons of the lodge, and the election was held annually.

In every lodge there were three classes of members: Masters, Fellows, and Apprentices. But it must be remarked that these were only three ranks or working positions, and that they do not by any means indicate that there were three degrees, in the sense in which that word is now understood by modern Freemasons.



The Masters were those who undertook contracts for building and were responsible to their employers for the fidelity shown in doing the work; the Fellows were the journeymen who were employed by these Master-builders; and the Apprentices were those youths who were engaged, under the Masters, in getting a knowledge of their Craft.

If there was a ceremonial of initiation or reception and secret knowledge of certain mysteries, that ceremony and that knowledge must have been common to and participated in by each of the three classes. Whatever was the Freemason's secret the Apprentice knew it as well as the Master, for one of Schaw's regulations required that at the admission or reception of a Master or Fellow, there should be present besides six Masters, two Entered Apprentices, whence it is evident that little if anything could have been taught to the newly accepted Master that the Apprentice did not already possess.

That the ceremony of initiation was in the 17th century a very simple one is evident from the slight references to it in the minutes of the lodges. The Statutes of 1598 required it to be performed in the presence alike of Masters and Apprentices, which shows, as has already been said, that it was a ceremony known to both. This appears to have consisted principally of the giving of what was called the "Mason Word," and a few secrets connected with it, which are called in one of the old minute books, "the secrets of the Mason Word." What these "secrets" were, it is now impossible to discover. But as we have seen that the Scottish Craft customs were originally derived from the English and the Continental Freemasons it is most probable that the secrets of the Word and the ceremonies of initiation were much the same as those described in the Sloane manuscript, heretofore quoted as practiced by the English Freemasons, and those described by Findel as used by the German Freemasons in the 12th century.

The Squaremen were companies of Wrights and Slaters in Scotland who were very intimately connected with the Freemasons, and who appear to have had, in many respects, quite similar, if not the same, customs.

Now these Squaremen had a ceremony of initiation, a word which was called the "Squaremen's word," and secret methods whereby one member could know another. In the ceremony of



initiation, which was called the "brithering," the candidate was blindfolded and prepared in other ways; an oath of secrecy was taken by him, and after the performances, which were secretly conducted, were finished, a dinner was given, the expenses of which were paid by the fee of initiation.

The banquet was in fact so important a part of the ceremony of initiation among the Freemasons that special provision for it was made by Schaw, the Warden General, in the Statutes of 1598. Apprentices were to pay on their admission six pounds to the "common banquet," and the Fellow Crafts paid ten pounds.

The Fellow Craft was also required to provide the lodge with ten shillings' worth of gloves. Brother Mackey was of opinion that nothing more clearly proves the connection of the Scottish with the Continental Freemasons than this reference in the Statutes of the former to the article of gloves to be provided for the lodge.² The use of gloves as a portion of the dress of an Operative Freemason is shown in early records to have been very common from early times on the Continent. M. Didron gives, in the Annales Archéologiques, several examples from old documents of the presentation to Freemasons and Stonecutters of gloves. Thus, in 1381 the Chatelain of Vallaines bought a large quantity of gloves to be given to the workmen, and the reason mentioned for the gift is that they might "Shield their hands from the stone and lime." In 1383 three dozen gloves were given to the Freemasons when they began the buildings at the Chartreuse of Dijon. At Amiens twenty-two pairs of gloves were given to the Freemasons.

The use of gloves seems to have been, among the several crafts, peculiar to the Freemasons, and their use is well explained as being intended for protection against the corrosive nature of the mortar which the workmen were compelled to handle.



¹ Jamieson defines the verb "to brither" thus: "To unite into a society or Corporation, sometimes by a very ludicrous process." See the "Dictionary of the Scottish Language."

² The argument of Brother Mackey may lose force when we consider that gifts of gloves to the workmen are of long standing in England as well as France. The Fabric Rolls of Westminster show that the dress, boots, gloves, and food of "Walter le Bole, mason" as well as his wages were given him in 1342. See Sir Gilbert Scott's work on Westminster Abbey, also Brother Edward Conder's "Hole Craft and Fellowship of Masons," p. 66. What we should recall is that the Speculative Freemasons of England, and the bodies established by them, have not maintained this old custom as the Continental brethren have done, but among the Operative Freemasons throughout Europe the practice seems to have been universal.

When Operative was followed by Speculative Freemasonry the use of this article of dress was not abandoned. In the Continental Masonic ceremonies to this day, the candidate is required to present two pair of gloves to the lodge on the night of his initiation. But the explanation now made of their use, of course, refers to them as symbols.

Another important ceremony connected with advancement to a higher rank in the fraternity was the production of the Assay Essay or Trial piece of work.

A very common custom among the early Continental gilds was to require of every Apprentice to any trade before he could be admitted to his freedom and the rights of a journeyman, that he should present to the gild into which he sought membership, a piece of finished work as a specimen and a proof of his skill in the art in which he had been instructed.

This custom was adopted among the Scottish Freemasons. When an Apprentice had served his time of probation and was desirous of being advanced to the rank of a Fellow or journeyman, he was required by the Statutes to present an *Essay* or piece of work to prove his skill and fully qualified knowledge of the trade.

At first the privilege of inspecting and judging the character of this trial piece was intrusted to the lodges, but afterward it seems to have been taken from them and given to the Incorporations. These, however, resigned this duty early in the 17th century. When an Apprentice wished to become a Fellow, he applied to his Lodge, which, in Edinburgh, referred him to the Incorporation of Masons and Wrights of St. Mary's Chapel. By that body the piece of work to be done was specified. Essay masters were appointed to attend the candidate and see that he did the work himself. When the task was done, it was submitted to the brethren, who by an open vote admitted or rejected the piece of work.

Brother Lyon very correctly finds a parallel to these *Essay* pieces of the Scottish Operative Freemasons, in the examinations for advancement from a lower to a higher degree found in the Speculative Lodges. But he is wrong in supposing that these tests for advancement were, in the "inflated language of the Masonic diplomas of the last century characterized as the 'won-



derful trials' which the neophyte 1 had had the 'fortitude to sustain' before attaining to the sublime degree of Master Mason."

The "wonderful trials" thus referred to were not the examinations to which the neophyte had been subjected to test his proficiency in the preceding degrees. They were the actual ceremonies of initiation through which he had passed. Considering their severity in the Continental Lodges, it is hardly an "inflation of language," to speak of some fortitude being needed to sustain them.

Annually both the Masters and the Fellows were required to renew their oath of fidelity and obedience to the rules of the brotherhood, and especially to take the obligation that they would not work with cowans.

It was also provided by the Statutes that yearly the Fellows and Apprentices should submit to an examination which should test their memory and knowledge of the principles of the art.

Now as it would not have been fair to expect an Apprentice or Fellow to remember what he had never been taught, this rule led to the introduction of a particular class of persons in the Lodges who were called "Intendars" or instructors, whose duty it was to instruct the newly admitted persons in the principles of the art.

This custom, according to Brother Lyon, still prevails in some of the Scottish lodges. In the United States, it is a very general practice at the present day to provide an Apprentice as soon as he has been initiated and a Fellow Craft when he has "passed," with an instructor whose duty it is to drill each of them accurately in the lecture of the degree into which he has just been admitted, so that when he applies for advancement he may be able to answer the questions that will be asked, and thus prove that he has made "due proficiency."

The changing over of Operative into Speculative Freemasonry which took place soon after the beginning of the 18th century, is the most important part of the history of the Institution. The gradual approaches to that condition in which the Operative element was wholly displaced by the Speculative, must therefore be regarded with great interest.

¹ From the Greek for "recently produced" and therefore quite often applied to the newly-made Freemason or any other initiate.



These approaches are marked by the introduction of persons who were not workmen masons into the Operative Lodges. Occasion has been had heretofore to speak of the reception by a Lodge of Operative Freemasons at Warrington in England, of two gentlemen who certainly were not Operative Freemasons, namely, Colonel Mainwaring and Elias Ashmole. This event occurred in the year 1646, and it is the earliest record in England of the acceptance of a non-professional member by a Lodge of Operative Freemasons.

We must remember that it does not, however, follow because this reception is the first that is found to be recorded that it was therefore the first that took place. On the contrary it is most probable that the custom of receiving non-operative members was a very old one. It had, as we have seen, been practiced by the Roman Colleges of Artificers, and was by them brought into the early Craft and Trade Gilds, and in due course was imitated by the more modern Operative Lodges. The practice still exists in the London Livery Companies, which we know are the successors of the Trade Gilds of the Middle Ages.

Moreover, in Scotland the custom of admitting non-operatives into the Lodges has a much older record than that of England to which we have just referred.

A minute of the Lodge of Edinburgh of the date of June 8, in the year 1600, an exact reproduction of which is given by Brother Lyon, records the presence at the meeting of the Lodge of William Boswell, Laird of Auchinlech. The communication was called for the purpose of considering a penalty that had been imposed upon the Warden. The Laird of Auchinlech took a part in discussing the affair, agreed to the decision at which the Lodge arrived, and signed his name and put his mark to the minutes just as did the Operative Freemasons.

There are very many other instances of the admission of men of title, persons whose positions placed them outside the ranks of architects and masons but acceptable as members. The case already cited of Boswell proves clearly that the practice existed before the close of the 16th century. If we had the records we might, it is fair to suppose, find many cases still earlier.

Certainly, Boswell's experience is not presented to us as being anything unusual. The presumption, therefore, is that the cus-



tom was not new, but how much older than that date we are unable to determine.

At the admission of these "Gentlemen Masons," as they were sometimes called, the ceremonies of initiation, whatever they were, appear to have been the same as those practiced in the reception of operative members. As in the present day, and in Speculative Freemasonry, rank or any other condition secures no exemption.

Several instances are recorded during the 17th century of brethren who were not Operative Freemasons being elected to preside over Lodges. Thus Elphingston, who was tutor of Airth and collector of the King's Customs, was in 1670 one of the Masters or Past Masters of the Lodge of Aberdeen. The Earl of Cassilis was in 1672 chosen as Deacon or head of the Lodge of Kilwinning. He had been preceded in the same office by Sir Alexander Cunningham, in 1671, and by the Earl of Eglinton in 1670. Lord William Cochrane, the son of the Earl of Dundonald, was in 1678 elected Warden of the same Lodge.

All these appointments were merely honorary, and intended, it is to be presumed, to secure the influence of the noblemen or men of wealth and rank who were thus honored. They were not expected to perform any of the laborious duties of the office, for which task it is most probable that they were unfit. This, as Brother Lyon observes, "may be inferred from the fact that when a nobleman or a laird (laird, meaning lord, or owner of an estate, or merely a landlord) was chosen to fill any of the offices named, deputies were elected from the operative members of the Kilwinning Lodge." 1

The relation of women to Freemasonry in Scotland during the 17th century is worthy of attention.

The reader has seen that in one of the English Constitutions, when referring to the Charges, it is written that "one of the Elders taking the Booke and that he or shee that is to be made a Mason shall lay their hands thereon and the charge shall be given."

From this passage, and particularly the use of the word "shee," some persons have drawn the quite natural inference that females were admitted. Brother Hughan, in commenting upon it, thinks

1 "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 52.



that the manuscript being a copy from a much older one, the word "shee" was carelessly retained, and that it is only an evidence that females were admitted in the early Gilds, a historical fact that can not be denied. But he is not prepared to advocate the opinion that women were admitted into the Mysteries of Freemasonry. He admits that the custom of the Gilds to admit women was gradually given up.

But as the passage quoted is found only in the York manuscript of 1693, it is more reasonable to suppose that the word "shee" was a mistake of the copyist in writing "they." Hence we have no satisfactory evidence that women were connected by initiation in the usual manner with the Masonic Lodges in England.

Brother Lyon contends that the obligation of the apprentice to protect the interests of his "dame," which is mentioned in the same manuscript, would indicate that it was lawful at that time in England for females, as employers, to do the work of Freemasons or masons.

This statement derives probability from the fact that at that time, in Scotland, the widows and daughters of freemen masons were, under certain restrictions, permitted to exercise the privilege of burgesses or citizens in executing mason's work.

Brother Lyon cites a minute of the Ayr Squaremen Incorporation of the date of 1628, which enacts that every freeman's daughter shall pay for her freedom the sum of eight pounds. But it is clear that if a fine was imposed for the freedom, there must have been a privilege accompanying it, which could have been none other than the right to do a freeman's work.

The Lodge of Edinburgh, in 1683, recognized this privilege and qualified it by certain restrictions. It was then enacted that a widow should not undertake work or employ journeymen herself, but might have the benefit of the work under the favor of some freeman "by whose advice and concurrence the work shall be undertaken and the journeymen agreed with." 1

The reader will see from these two minutes that, from 1628 to 1683, women, the widows or orphans of masons, were in the

¹ The studious Freemason will doubtless reflect upon the connection with the obligation especially favoring the female relatives of the Craftsmen, an injunction that may in days of old have been much more helpful in promise than now when the pledge refers only to what shall not be done and does not so distinctly specify the things to do. Freemasonry thus early was brotherhood to the widow, fatherhood to the orphan.



habit of employing journeymen to do work given to them by the patrons or clients of their husbands or fathers.

But this custom growing into an evil, in time the women acting independently and assuming the position and exercising the rights of Master Masons, the Lodge of Edinburgh found it was necessary at length to correct the abuse and to restrict the privilege. The new law compelled the females to undertake the work and employ the journeymen under the direction of Master Masons, each of whom, acting for the widow, discharged the duties without receiving compensation (which was strictly forbidden) and gave her the profits.

Another practice of the Scottish Freemasons in the 17th century was that of opening the Lodge with prayer. There is no record of the existence of such a custom in England, although it is highly probable that the same practice prevailed in both countries. Freemasonry being a later institution in Scotland, we have seen that it took many of its customs from the sister kingdom.

The use of prayer as an introductory ceremony has always been practiced in the English Speculative Lodges. Combining this circumstance with the fact now known that it was observed by the Scottish Operatives, we have an additional reason for believing that it was a practice among the English Operative Masons of the 17th and earlier centuries.

Brother Lyon says that in this act of opening with prayer, the Lodge of Edinburgh "followed an example which had been set in the ancient Constitutions of the English Masons which open and close with prayer." Here our generally accurate historian appears to have fallen into an error by confounding the form of composition adopted in writing a manuscript with that of opening a lodge, two things evidently very distinct and different.

We must of course admit that all the old English Constitutions commence with a religious invocation, and that they end either with a prayer for help or an imprecatory formula, a selfimposed form of penalty, like that found in the condition of an oath to keep the Statutes.

But in a careful examination of all these Constitutions from the Regius to the Papworth manuscript, that is from the first to that of a more nearly recent date, Brother Mackey failed to find any regulation or article which required that the business of a



lodge shall be preceded by prayer. The only regulation that has a religious bearing is the one that sets forth the necessity of a reverence for God and Holy Church and the avoidance of heresy or error.

That it was the practice of the early English Operative Lodges to open and close with prayer, is an opinion founded wholly on supposition, but for the reasons already given the conclusion appears to be a probable one.

But the use of prayer in the Scottish Lodges of the 17th century is not a supposition. That is proved by actual records. Brother Lyon, in his invaluable work, to which we have been almost wholly indebted for the facts in the present and the preceding chapter, supplies us with two forms of prayers, one "to be said at the convening," and the other "to be said before dismissing." Both are taken from the minute-books of Mary's Chapel Incorporation for the year 1699, and it will be interesting to compare them with the oldest English formula, namely, that given by Preston.

The first of these, or the prayer at the opening of the Lodge, is in the following words:

"O Lord, we most humblie beseech thee to be present with us in mercy, and to bless our meeting and haill (whole) exercise which wee now have in hand. O Lord, enlighten our understandings and direct our hearts and mynds, so with thy good Spirit, that wee may frame all our purposes and conclusions to the glory of thy name and the welfare of our Brethren; and therefore O Lord, let no partiall respect, neither of ffeed (enmity) nor favour, draw us out of the right way. But grant that we may ever so frame all our purposes and conclusions to the glory of thy name and the welfare of our Brethren. Grant these things, O Lord, unto us, and what else thou sees more necessarie for us, and that only for the love of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, our alone Lord and Saviour; To whom, with thee, O Father, and the blessed Spirit of Grace, wee render all praise, honor and glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

The second prayer, or that used at the dismissal or closing of the Lodge, is as follows:

"O Lord, wee most humbly acknowledge thy goodnesse in meeting with us together at this tyme, to confer upon a present condition of this world. O Lord, make us also study heaven and



heavenly myndednesse, that we may get our souls for a prey. And O Lord, be with us and accompany us the rest of this day, now and forever. Amen."

The importance of this record of prayers at opening and closing in the Scottish Lodges, is that it adds great force to the claim that a similar custom existed in the English Lodges at the same period. The statement made by the biographer of Wren and quoted by Findel, that the mediæval Freemasons of England commenced their labor each day at sunrise by a prayer, the Master taking his station in the East and the Brethren forming in a half circle around him, is a tradition. How much of fact there is to this claim is a matter of doubt. There is the want of a trustworthy record coming down by reliable channels from that time. But the fact that there is such a record, absolutely reliable in the minutes of a Scottish Lodge of the period, throws necessarily an impress of great probability upon the tradition.

That the record of the Scottish Lodge is a minute made in the last year but one of the 17th century does not necessarily lead to the inference that the custom had just then begun. The record is more likely, when there is no evidence to the contrary, to have been that of a custom long previously in existence than of one that had just then been adopted.

Therefore we may fairly conclude that it was the practice of the Scottish Lodges of the 17th century to open and close their meetings with prayer, a ceremony that we have reason to infer was also practiced by the English Lodges of the same period.

The last of the Scottish Masonic customs to which it is necessary to refer is that of the use of Marks. These were employed instead of, or sometimes as additions to, the written signature.

This is an interesting subject and requires a very careful and thorough study.

The presence of certain figures or characters chiseled on the stones of a building has been remarked by travelers as occurring in almost all countries where architecture had made any progress and at very early epochs. The remark was made by Ainsworth, an Oriental traveler, that he found among some ruins in Mesopotamia that "every stone, not only in the chief building but in the walls and bastions and other public monuments, when not defaced



by time, is marked with a character which is for the most part either a Chaldean letter or numeral."1

On the floor of a tomb at Agra, in India, it was found that every stone was inscribed with a peculiar mark chiseled upon it by the workman. Copies of over sixty of these marks were given in 1865 by a writer in the London *Freemasons' Quarterly Review*.

In an interesting work on Architecture by George Godwin,² the author, referring to the Freemasons of the Middle Ages makes the following remarks:

"Several years ago my attention was led to the fact that many of our ancient buildings exhibited on the face of the walls, both inside and outside, marks of a peculiar character on the face of the stones which were evidently the work of the original builders; and it occurred to me that if examined and compared they might serve to throw light upon these bands of operatives. I made a large collection of them in England, France, Belgium and Germany, some of which were published in the Archæologia. simply the marks made by the Masons to identify their work; but it is curious to find them exactly the same in different countries and descending from early times to the present day; for in parts of Germany and Scotland tables of marks are still preserved in the Lodges, and one is given to the (practical) mason on taking up his freedom. He cuts it, however, on the bed of the stone now instead of on its face. The marks are usually two or three inches long."

These marks were, it is evident, required by the Masters or Superintendents of the buildings in process of construction to be used by the workmen, so that each one's work might be identified when blame or approval was to be awarded. Each mark was a measure of precaution, and the employment of marks is no evidence, unless the mark itself is of a purely Masonic character, that the workmen who used them were Freemasons.

At first, it seems from the observations of Ainsworth, they were merely letters or numbers. Afterwards those found at Agra were principally astronomical or mathematical. But when used



¹ "Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea, and Armenia," by William Francis Ainsworth. London, 1842.

² "History in Ruins; a Handbook of Architecture for the Unlearned." By George Godwin, F.R.S., London, 1858.

by organized bands of Freemasons we find among these marks such symbols as the hour-glass, the pentalpha, and the square and compasses. When the Freemasons followed the precautionary system of the ordinary stonecutters and adopted the use of marks, they gave, most generally, a symbolic character to them, though sometimes they made use of monograms¹ taken from their own names.

M. Didron, who discovered such marks at Spire, Worms, Strassburg, Rheims, Basle, and several other places, and who made a report of his investigations to the Historical Committee of Arts and Sciences of Paris, believed that he could discover in them reference to distinct schools or Lodges of Freemasons. He divides them into two classes, those of the overseers and those of the men who worked the stones. The marks of the first class consist of monogrammatic characters, while those of the second are of the nature of symbols, such as shoes, trowels, and mallets.

We think it is possible that something like this distinction is to be found in the old Scottish marks. Of the 91 marks, copies of which are given in exact reproduction by Brother Lyon as taken from the minute-book of the Lodge of Edinburgh, 16 are evidently monograms, such as GI, ME, AL, VH, NI, etc., while the remaining 75 are symbols, principally the cross in various forms, the triangle, the hour-glass, represented by two triangles joined at their apices, or angles, the pentalpha or star-shaped figure formed by five straight lines, etc. In one instance the monogram and the symbol are combined, where David Salmon adopts as his mark a fish or salmon, with the head in the three-cornered form of the Delta, or Greek letter that is the same as D.

There was undoubtedly a distinction of monogrammatic and symbolic marks, but whether Didron's idea that they belonged to two different classes of workmen is correct or not, it is impossible for us positively to ascertain. Brother Lyon, however, says that "in regard to the arrangement of Marks into distinctive classes, one for Apprentices, one for Fellow Crafts, and a third for Foremen — the practice of the Lodge of Edinburgh, or that of Kilwinning, as far as can be learned from their records, was never in harmony with the teachings of tradition on that point."



¹ "Monogram" is from the Greek, meaning a single letter. But it is frequently applied to two or more letters joined to make the one character.

Some have supposed that the degree now called the "Mark Master's Degree" was originally manufactured by certain ritual makers toward the close of the 18th century and attached as an extra degree to the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Brother Mackey had in his possession the original charter granted in 1802 by the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem, of Charleston, S. C., to American Eagle Mark Lodge No. 1.1 When Thomas Smith Webb was establishing his new system he inserted the Mark degree in his ritual and made it the fourth degree of the American Rite, as it is practiced in the United States of America.² It has been supposed that Webb derived his degree from the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, and it is not improbable that he did so. More recently it has been discovered that the degree of Mark Mason and that of Mark Master Mason was given in Scotland by a Craft Lodge as early as 1778. An excerpt made by that untiring student, Brother W. J. Hughan, from the minutes of the Lodge Operative Banff under date of January 7, 1778, shows that the degree of Mark Mason was conferred on Fellow Crafts, and that of Mark Master Mason on Master Masons.

However, the earliest minute we can find is in the records of the Royal Arch Chapter at Portsmouth, England. This Chapter was formerly No. 3 of the "Moderns" but is now No. 257. Formed in 1769, Brother Thomas Dunckerley was then present as Provincial Grand Master. He gave the warrant to the new Chapter and the records, in cipher, go on to say: "Having lately rec'd the Mark, he made the bre'n Mark Masons and Mark Masters, and each chuse their Mark, viz., x x x x. He also told us of this mann of writing, which is to be used in the degree w'ch we may give to others so they be F. C. for Mark Masons and Master M. for Mark Masters."



¹ This document was published in 1851 by Brother Mackey in the "Southern and Western Masonic Miscellany," vol. ii, p. 300.

² Of the origin of the ceremony we need not now do more than to remind the reader that among the unlettered workmen of old it is easy to see the influence of a formal act in the recognition of such an important thing as the Mark. Taking the place of the workman's name, being the visible stamp certifying to his claim of wages for work done (probably it was also a guide to the use and placing of the stone so marked) one can see the value of the Mark and the likelihood at a very early date of the receiving of it being the occasion of an impressive ceremonial.

² See the "Origin of the English Rite of Freemasonry," by William James Hughan. Revised edition, Leicester, England, 1909, p. 147. Also note the "History of the Lodge and Chapter, No. 257, and the K. T. Preceptory, No. 2," by Alexander Howell. Portsmouth, England, 1894.

The Mark degree was mentioned in the records for the early part of 1792 of St. Andrews Chapter at Boston, Mass. ¹

The striking and impressive ritual, as all rituals do, has of course grown gradually to its present extent. But it is hardly necessary to say that the allegory and the tradition of the origin of the degree at the Temple of King Solomon is a mere symbolic myth, wholly unsupported by historical authority.

The Statutes enacted by William Schaw, in 1598, for the government of the Freemasons of Scotland, direct that on the reception and admission of every Fellow Craft his name and Mark shall be inserted in the book or register of the Lodge.

The later Lodge minutes show that giving or taking a Mark was accompanied by a fee, which was paid by the Fellow for this privilege.

The minutes also show that Apprentices were also permitted to select and use a Mark.

The position and the rights of Apprentices in the Scottish Lodges is worthy of notice, especially as throwing some light on their condition in the English Lodges, of which so little is said in the old Constitutions.

The presence of Apprentices at the admission of Fellow Crafts was provided for in the Statutes of Schaw, as has already been seen.

Another privilege granted to the Apprentices was that of giving or withholding their assent to any proposed addition to their ranks in the Lodge.

They thus appear to have been so far recognized as active members. But Brother Lyon says that this concession does not appear to have been granted to all Apprentices, but only to such as being "bound for the freedom" afterward became "Mason burgesses" and members of the Incorporation — Apprentices whose aim was that of becoming qualified for employment as journeymen.

If this view of Brother Lyon is correct it would show an aristocratic distinction of rank, one which was certainly unknown to the English Freemasons.

Apprentices were sometimes permitted to undertake work, of no very great value, on their own account, but with the consent of

¹ See the report of "Celebration of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Anniversary of St. Andrews Royal Arch Chapter, 1769–1894," published by the Chapter. Page 58.



their Masters; a privilege that does not appear to have been conceded by the English Statutes.

"Passing" an Apprentice to the rank of a Fellow Craft, although not a ceremony which added anything to the store of his Masonic knowledge, was still necessary to the spreading of the influence and the increase of the funds of the Lodge. Apparently toward the end of the 17th century, many Apprentices were disinclined, at the end of their time of service, to undergo the trouble and expense of passing, but were disposed to work as unpassed journeymen. So at the beginning of the 18th century it was made a duty for Apprentices soon after their time of apprenticeship was out to "make themselves Fellow Crafts."

Fellow Crafts, or journeymen, were permitted to have Apprentices of their own, and it was provided by law that a Master might employ such Fellows and yet not also employ their Apprentices, or he might employ the Apprentice and not the Fellow to whom he was bound. This seems to have been a peculiarity of Scottish Freemasonry in the 17th century. No similar provision is found in the English Constitutions.

Apprentices were prohibited from marrying, a very necessary provision, considering their relation to their Master's houses, which it may well be supposed existed in every other country.

In all of these customs of the Scottish Freemasons in the 17th century, we see the features of an Operative system. But this system was admitting the gradual entering wedge of the Speculative element exhibited in the admission into the Operative Lodges of non-professional members.

The progress of this transition from an Operative to a Speculative character is better marked, or rather better recorded, in the Scottish than in the English history of Freemasonry.

Through the latter we are aroused with suddenness from the viewing of the Operative system as detailed in the manuscript Constitutions extending into the very beginning of the 18th century, to the unexpected forming, without previous notice, of a purely Speculative Grand Lodge a very few years after the date of the last written Constitution, which makes no reference to such an institution.

But the Grand Lodge of Scotland was not organized until nineteen years after that of the sister kingdom. The approaches to



the change were gradual and well marked, and the struggle which ended in the victory of Speculative or modern Freemasonry has been carefully recorded.

The story of the events which led to the establishment in the year 1736 of the Grand Lodge of Scotland form interesting materials for a distinct chapter, which we shall proceed to discuss in due season.



CHAPTER FIFTY-NINE

THE FRENCH GILDS OF THE MIDDLE AGES



N account has already been given in this work of the character of the English Craft Gilds or corporations of workmen. We have not been able to concur in the views of Benjamin Thorpe, nor in the qualified opinion of Brentano, History of the Development of Gilds, that we are to look for the origin of these gilds, not

in the Roman Colleges, but in the Scandinavian fraternities.

In Gaul, and later on, with greater growth, in France, we find the existence of similar gilds or corporations of workmen. There we are able to trace them more directly to the Roman Colleges of Artificers, as their models, because, after the fall of the Empire and the invasion of the barbarians, the old inhabitants were not wiped out by the invaders. On the contrary, the Franks were well disposed to the Roman culture and civilization, accepted many of the Roman laws and customs, imitated the remaining monuments of Roman taste and skill, and they finally adopted, in the place of their own rough Teutonic dialect, a modified form of the Latin language.

The Craft Gilds or corporations of workmen which were in existence in Gaul at an early period after the decay of the Roman Empire, continued to exist with some sudden halts in their course until the 12th and 13th centuries, when they were fully developed in the Corporations des Métiers or chartered trade companies.

The writers of the thorough article on this subject in Lacroix's large work on the *Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, have advanced the theory that the Gilds came into Gaul with the conquerors, and were therefore of Scandinavian or Teutonic origin. But in their later studies they appear to admit the fact that there was a very close connection between them and the Roman Colleges.

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Thierry, in his *Histoire des Gaulois*, is of the opinion that the corporations, like the local self-governing communes,¹ found their origin in the principles that governed the Roman Colleges. The Gild, he says, was the moving power; the Roman Colleges were the materials on which it acted and out of which it was born. He thinks it would be interesting to examine how this motive principle as a new element has been applied to the ancient element of town and city organization which we historically know to have been of Roman origin and in what proportion it is combined with them.

In other words, Thierry would seek to trace the connection between the Gilds and the Roman Colleges and to determine the influence of one upon the other.

This is the very investigation in which we propose to be engaged in the present chapter, as we have already pursued in the previous discussion of the early English Gilds.

The theory that we have hitherto maintained, and which we have seen no reasonable cause to deny, is that the Gilds were the successors, as it were, by inheritance of the Roman Colleges.

Therefore, though the subject of these institutions has already been very fully treated, it will be worth our while to introduce the history of the early Gilds of Gaul and of their progress until they arrive at the 12th century in the *Corporations des Métiers*, by a brief account of what has been said at length on the subject of the Colleges of Artificers of ancient Rome.

The corporations of artisans, which received the name of Collegia Artificum or Colleges of Artificers, are supposed to have been founded by Numa. He first divided the artisans of Rome into nine colleges, gave them regulations for their government, and laid down the peculiar rites and customs to be observed by them. In their course from the Kingdom to the Empire they met with many troubles. They were abolished by Tullus Hostilius, reëstablished by Servius, again outlawed and anew instituted and enlarged in their faculties by the decemvirs.² Under the republic they were a constant source of disquiet and danger; their unruly members, misled by the lawless, repeatedly threat-



¹ Commune, the smallest political division of France, governed by a mayor and council.

² Meaning "men of the ten" and applied to the group of Roman magistrates who in the year 451 before Christ were set to work arranging the laws into a code.

ened the security of the state. They were, during the latter years of the republic, often dissolved and as often reëstablished. Finally, Caligula reconstituted them and invested them with all their ancient liberties. Trajan and his successors showed the Colleges but little favor; they were, however, tolerated because the artisans, deprived of consideration in the city, were much better received in the provinces, and could be retained at the Capital only by securing to them their privileges. At this epoch they had become very numerous both at Rome and in its provinces. A writer of the time of Alexander Severus names thirty-two colleges; Constantine mentions thirty more, and the inscriptions preserved by Heineccius, their most reliable historian, lists many more.

The Colleges required for their legal existence the authority of the law—in modern phrase, it was necessary for them to be incorporated. Those which were not so formally chartered were styled *illicit*, or unlawful, and their existence was forbidden.

To each college, the artisans of only a particular profession or handicraft were admitted. Slaves even might become members with the consent of their masters. At length, persons of distinction who were not of the profession practiced by the College were received as patrons or honorary members, and these became the protectors of the College.

Some of the trades, as for instance that of the bakers, were hereditary, and the practice of the trade descended from father to son.

No artist or handicraftsman was permitted to belong to more than one College.

Each College had the right to enact its own regulations for its internal government. For this purpose, and for the discussion of their common interests, the members frequently assembled, they elected their officers, and imposed a tax for the support of the common "chest" or treasury, and decided these and all other questions by a majority of votes.

Each College had its patron god or goddess and exercised peculiar religious rites of sacrifice and memorial feasts, which sometimes sank into drunken revels.

Such is a brief outline of the Craft Gilds, as they may justly be styled, which were in Rome at the time of the breaking-up of



the Empire. These Gilds, for the reason already assigned, flourished with great popularity in all the provinces from southern Gaul to the northern limits of England. The evidence of that fact exists in the many inscriptions which have been preserved and which prove their residence and their labors in every part of Europe.

The writers of the article on the Corporations of Craftsmen, in the work of Lacroix, assert that under the conquering Germans, from the moment that Europe broke away from the government of Rome, without ever completely escaping from the influence of its laws, the fraternities of workmen never for an instant ceased to exist. The few remains that we possess of them do not permit us to believe in their prosperous condition, but they attest at least their persistence.¹

These fraternities of workmen were the Provincial Colleges which the invaders found when they entered the countries whence they had expelled the former Roman masters. But the Teutonic tribes, whose invasion was for the purpose of a permanent settlement, and not like that of the Huns, merely for temporary holding and for waste, were not, as has been well observed, alien in mind and spirit from the Romans whom they had defeated. They had, to some extent, become familiar with the civilization which in the trial of strength they had overcome. Some of them had been soldiers in the imperial service or at the court. Many of them had listened to the teachings of Christian missionaries, and though in an imperfect way, had adopted Christianity as their religion.²

When, therefore, says Church, they founded their new kingdom in Gaul, in Spain, and in Italy, the things about them were not absolutely new to them. The influences of the Christian religion, which they imperfectly professed, of the Roman laws, which they did not altogether abolish, and of the Latin language, which they began insensibly to adopt, were exerted in producing a tolerance for the Roman corporations of workmen, as well as for many other Roman customs, and a facility for adopting the same sys-



¹ The article in Lacroix's "Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance," which treats of the "Corporations de Métiers," was written by MM. Monteil and Rabutaux. To their researches we are indebted for much that is contained in this chapter; but for the sake of brevity and convenience we shall credit the data by a general reference to Lacroix.

² "The Beginning of the Middle Ages," by Richard William Church. New York. p. 46.

tem of organizing workmen, which led in time to the founding of the Gilds.

Of the regular progress of these Gilds in the earlier centuries, as if they were a mere continuation of the corporations of the Roman Colleges, we have sufficient, if not abundant, records.

Lucius Ampelius, a Latin writer of the 5th century, mentions, in his Liber Memorialis, a consul or chief of the locksmiths, whence we may infer an organized body of those craftsmen. Under the Merovingian kings, or the first dynasty of France, we meet with a corporation of goldsmiths. The bakers were probably organized under Charlemagne, as he took measures for their regulation, and in 630 they are distinctly spoken of as a corporation in the ordinances of Dagobert.

Lombardy, which after its conquest by Charlemagne was in close relations with France, had many colleges or corporations of artisans. We find in Ravenna, in 943, a college of fishermen, and ten years afterward a chief of the corporation of merchants; in 1001 a chief of the corporation of butchers. In 1061 Philip I. granted certain privileges to the Master Chandlers.

The "ancient customs" of the butchers are mentioned in the time of Louis VII., in 1162. The same prince, in 1160, granted to the wife and heirs of one Yves Laccohre the liberty of practicing five trades, namely, those of the glovers, the purse-makers, the belt-makers, the cobblers, and the shoemakers.

Later, under the reign of Philip II. similar grants or concessions are more frequent.

This king, whose feats in war had won for him the title of "Conqueror" and "Augustus" is said to have approved the laws of several corporations. In 1182 he confirmed those of the butchers, and granted them several privileges. During the next year the skinners and the drapers were also the objects of his favor.²

Throughout all Europe, say the writers in Lacroix's work, toward the 12th century, Italy gave the first impulse to restore the splendor of the corporations which for some centuries had gradually dimmed in importance. The fraternities of artisans in the north of France also formed themselves into corporations, whence they spread into the cities across the Rhine. The Gild in Ger-



¹ "Livre des Métiers" (Book of the Trades), by Étienne Boileau. Introduction by G. Depping.

² Lacroix, "Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance."

many had for a long time preserved its first form, and therefore the German and the French corporations are not to be confounded, though they had a common origin.

The most important event that marked the reign of Louis VI. in the 12th century was the admission to civil and political rights of the people of the cities,¹ and the establishment of the Communes, or independent municipal governments. One of the results of this movement was the revived organization of the Parisian Hanse, a gild type of organization for mutual protection and profit. This, which Lacroix calls the oldest and most considerable of the French corporations, was a company of the recently made freemen citizens of Paris. This was a corporation to which was given the control of river travel. A corporation similar in character had existed during the Roman domination, but in the lapse of time and under changes of government had become extinct. To this ancient corporation, however, it is probable that the new one owed its origin.

The Hanse of Paris was always treated with great favor by the Kings. Louis VII. confirmed its privileges, and Philip II. increased them. At length it obtained the rights to the navigation of the Seine and Yonde between Mantes and Auvern. Foreign merchants could not pass these limits and bring goods into Paris unless they had affiliated with the Hanse, and associated also in their mercantile gains with a citizen who served as their pledge. This body presided over the unloading of all goods brought into Paris, and controlled all buying and selling. After a short time similar corporations were established in all the cities bordering on the sea or on rivers.

Previous to the second half of the 13th century several corporations of artists or Craft Gilds had been authorized by Kings. But it is only in the reign of St. Louis, from 1226 to 1270, that we date the first general measures taken for the establishment of the communities in France, and of having the corporations on a legal basis. Up to that time the position of Prévôt or Provost of Paris had been a marketable office, which was sold to the highest bidder. King Louis resolved to reform this abuse, and appointed Stephen Boileau to the office of Provost of Paris.

¹ Not until the 14th century was the stain of serfdom (bondage to the landed estate) removed from the peasants.



Of Étienne, or Stephen Boileau, French writers have not been sparing in their compliments. He was undoubtedly a magistrate worthy of the greatest praise. To him Paris is indebted for its police. He moderated and fixed the taxes and imposts which, under previous Provosts, had been levied unfairly on trade and commerce. But his most important act in relation to our present subject was to arrange the merchants and artisans into distinct communities or corporations under the name of fraternities, with specific statutes for their government.

He collected from old records and other ancient sources the customs and usages of the various crafts, most of which had never been written. He compared and arranged them, and probably improved them in many respects, preserved them as monuments in the archives of the Châtelet (little castle), which was the Gildhall of Paris, and thus composed his invaluable work entitled the *Livre des Métiers*, or the "Book of the Crafts."²

Depping's introduction to this work says that "it has the advantage of being for the most part the work of the corporations themselves, and not a series of regulations drawn up by the authority of the State."

The systems of corporations now began to enter into the regular framework of the social organization. Royal confirmations of charters, which had been rare during the 12th century, were multiplied in the 13th, and became a common practice in the 14th century.³

As an evidence of the growth abroad of these fraternities in cities near to France, it may be noted that in the year 1228 Bologna had twenty-one corporations of crafts; in 1321 Parma had eighteen, and in 1376 Turin had twenty-six.

The Livre des Métiers of Boileau contains the statutes or regulations of one hundred different corporations, and these were not all that were then existing in Paris. Some, for various reasons, had neglected or declined to have themselves placed on record at the Châtelet.



¹ The name has been spelled Boileau, Boyleau, Boleaue, or Boylesve. We have given the most usual form.

² This work, long in manuscript, was first printed and published in 1837 in one volume quarto at Paris by G. Depping, who has enriched it with a learned Introduction.

³ Lacroix, "Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance."

During the succeeding governments the corporations were greatly multiplied. Under the control of the Chancellor Tellier, in the reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., Henri Sauval records in his *Histoire et Recherches des Antiquités de la Ville de Paris*, that he had counted 1,531 corporations in that city.

Some of these Parisian corporations possessed unusual privileges. Such were the Gild or corporation of Drapers, who held a preëminence over all others, the Grocers, the Mercers, the Skinners, the Hosiers, and the Goldsmiths.

Some of the corporations were held directly under the royal authority and some under certain high officers of the court.

Through the first centuries after the breaking-up of the Roman Empire the old law as to unauthorized or unlawful corporations seems to have become powerless or to have been wholly disregarded, and the corporations were constituted and operated at the will of their organizers. Later, and more especially after the 12th century, the approval of their regulations by the King or other person, in whose territory they were, was required to give them a legal condition.

These corporations had their peculiar privileges granted to them by the royal or other competent authority, and their statutes and rules enacted, for the most part, by themselves. They were known one from the other, by their coats of arms, which they proudly displayed in their processions and on other public occasions.

Each of the corporations held its General Assembly, to which the members frequently came from a great distance. Frequently, those who were absent from the meetings were fined.

The number of craftsmen who attended was sometimes very large. For instance, in 1361, the General Assembly of the Drapers of Rouen was made up of more than a thousand persons.¹

These Assemblies were generally called together by the officers of the King, who assisted at them either in person or by their delegates. But sometimes they were summoned by the artisans without royal authority.

To render the attendance on them more convenient, artisans of the same profession usually inhabited the same quarter of the city, and even the same street. Sometimes this common resi-

¹ Lacroix, "Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance."



dence was made necessary. Such was the case of the booksellers of Paris, who were compelled to dwell beyond the bridges on the right bank of the River Seine.

This is a very old custom of the Crafts. See the Bakers Street of Jeremiah, xxxvii, 21; the Valley of Craftsmen of Nehemiah, xi, 35, and several other Bible references. There is also in Josephus, Concerning the Jewish War, V. viii, 1, mention of the smiths' bazaar, the wool market, the clothes market, of equal interest to us.

The writers in Lacroix's book assert that these communities or corporations were in possession of all the privileges that formerly attached to the Roman Colleges. They could possess property, carry on actions at law through a procurator or agent, and accept legacies. They had a common "chest" or treasury, exacted dues of their members, and exercised a police control over them, and, to some extent, held the position of a court having the power to decide disputes and to punish crime. They struggled to preserve and to enlarge their privileges, and took part in all the conflicts of those violent times and in the quarrels, which were by no means few, between the Masters and the workmen. Some of them even had and used a power over artisans who were not members of the corporation.

Most of the corporations had the officers elected by the community, though in some cases they were appointed by the King or other outside authority.

The members of the corporation were divided into three classes: Apprentices, Companions, and Masters. The writers in Lacroix's work refer to these classes as degrees, but evidently without attaching to the word the meaning conveyed in the modern Masonic use of it. They were simply ranks, or classes, the lower ones being obedient to the higher.

The length of apprenticeship was from two to eight years. With most of the trades the Companion had to undergo a long wait before he could become a Master. The Companion was usually called a varlet gaignant; that is, a man who earns wages equivalent to the English journeyman, or, as he was called in the old Masonic charges, a Fellow.

When the Apprentice, having completed his apprenticeship, or the Companion was desirous of being promoted to the rank of



Master, he assumed the title of Aspirant. He was subjected to frequent rigid examinations, and was required to prove his fitness for advancement by executing some of the principal products of the trade or craft which he professed. This was called his Chefd'Œuvre, or masterpiece, and in its making he was surrounded by minute formalities. He was closely confined in an edifice or apartment specially prepared for the occasion. He was deprived of all communication with his relations or friends, and worked under the eyes of officers of the corporation. His task lasted sometimes for several months. It was not always confined to the direct products of the trade, but sometimes extended to the making of the tools used in his craft.

The Aspirant having successfully submitted to the examinations and trials imposed upon him, and having renewed his oath of fidelity to the King, an oath which he must have previously taken as an Apprentice, was required afterwards to pay a tax, which was sometimes heavy, and which was divided between the King or Lord and the corporation. This tax was, however, remitted or greatly reduced in the case of the son of a Master of the Craft. From this usage has been, undoubtedly, derived the custom which still prevails in the Speculative Freemasonry of some countries, and which was once universal, of initiating a Louveteau, or the son of a Freemason, at an earlier age than that laid down for other candidates.

The statutes of every corporation exercised constant and close watchfulness over the private life and morals of the members.

Bastards, those not born of lawful marriage, could not be accepted as Apprentices. To be admitted to the Mastership it was necessary that the Aspirant should enjoy a stainless reputation. To use the modern Masonic phrase, he must be "under the tongue of good report."

If an artisan associated with heretics or those who were expelled from the Church, or ate or drank with them, he was subject to punishment.

The statutes, laws and charges taught and cultivated general good feeling as well as affectionate relations between the individual members.

The merchant or craftsman could not strive to entice a customer to enter his shop when he was approaching that of his neighbor.

¹ Lacroix, "Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance."



Improper language to each other subjected the offender to a fine.

With reference to religion, each corporation formed a religious fraternity, which was placed under the favor of some saint, who was deemed the special protector of the profession. Thus St. Crispin was the patron saint of the Shoemakers, and St. Eloy of the Smiths.

Every corporation possessed a chapel in some church of the locality, and it was often the case that they maintained a chaplain of their own.

The corporations had religious exercises on stated occasions for the spiritual and temporal prosperity of the community. They rendered funeral honors to the dead, and took care of the widows and orphans of deceased members. They distributed alms and sent to the hospitals the gifts which had been collected at their feasts.

The brethren received a strange workman in their trade when he came to the city. They welcomed him, provided for his first wants, sought work for him, and if that failed the eldest Companion gave up his own place to him.

But this character in time weakened, the banquets became excesses, conflicts took place between the workmen, and combines were formed against the industrial classes.

The law then interfered, and these fraternities or Gilds were forbidden, but without much success.

It will be very evident to the reader that the details here given of the rise and progress, the form and organization of the mediæval corporations or Gilds do not refer to the Freemasons exclusively, but to the circle of the handicrafts of which that brotherhood constituted only one, but an important, portion. Before the middle of the 12th or the beginning of the 13th century, the corporations of Freemasons were not distinguished from the other crafts by any peculiar organization. They had undoubtedly gained a lead over the other gilds because of their connection with the construction of Cathedrals and other great public buildings. But "at that time," says Fergusson, "all trades and professions were organized in the same manner. The Gild of Freemasons differed

¹ "History of Architecture in all Countries from the Earliest Times to the Present Day." By James Fergusson, F.R.S., etc., London, 1867, vol. i, p. 477.



FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY



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in no essential particulars from those of the Shoemakers or Hatters, the Tailors or Vintners — all had their Masters and Past Masters, their Wardens and other Officers, and were recruited from a body of Apprentices, who were forced to undergo years of probationary servitude before they were admitted to practice their arts."

Fergusson came to the conclusion that the Freemasons were an insignificant body. Hence in his book he pays no attention to them outside of Germany. He even underrates their powers as designers and architects. Fergusson thinks that the designs of the cathedrals and other religious edifices were made by Bishops, who, taking as a model some former building, planned to correct the mistakes and suggested improvements to the builders. History has shown that in France, as well as elsewhere, there were at an early period laymen who were noted architects, yet anything but officials of the Church in other capacities.

Only one fair inference can be taken from the fact that all the other handicrafts were organized on the same plan as the Freemasons. We know that the Gild spirit was everywhere, and that there was a common origin for it, which most writers have correctly referred to the Roman Colleges, and that these were the most ancient Gilds with which we are acquainted.

We have thus far treated of the Gilds in general, or the corporations of all the trades. It is now proper to direct our attention exclusively to the Masonic Gilds as they present themselves to us in France during the Middle Ages.

Larousse, who has compiled the best and most complete encyclopædic dictionary in the French language, makes a distinction between the associations of masons and those of the Freemasons in France, a distinction which has existed in other countries, but with more especial peculiarities in France. Like all the other crafts, they were divided into three ranks or degrees of Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master. But we fail to find any evidence that there was a separate initiation or an esoteric knowledge peculiar to each rank which would constitute it a degree in the modern and technical sense of that word.

This author, Larousse, mixes the history of the French with that of the German Freemasons, but makes the Operative Masonic Gilds spring out of a jealousy or rivalry on the part of the Operative with the better-cultured architects.



He says that while the nomadic or gypsy-like constructors of cathedrals and castles, that is to say, the Traveling Freemasons, who, we are told, springing out of Lombardy, were organized at Strassburg, at Cologne, and at York, formed a sort of aristocracy of the Craft, other Freemasons, attached to the soil and living, therefore, always in one place, formed independent and distinct corporations in the 15th century. We think, however, that such organizations may be found at an earlier period.

These Craftsmen did not, as did the German and English Freemasons, claim to be the disciples of St. John the Baptist, but placed themselves under the patronage of St. Blaise.

St. Blaise was a bishop and martyr who suffered with other Christians in the 3d century, during the cruel attacks of Diocletian. His legend says that he was tortured by having his flesh torn with iron combs, such as are used in carding wool. Hence he has been adopted by the Wool-staplers as their patron. But it is far from clear why St. Blaise should have been selected by the Masons of France as their protecting saint, since there is nothing in the legend of his life that connects him with architecture or building.

The Gild or Corporation of Freemasons comprised Masons proper; that is, Builders, Stonecutters, Plaisterers, and Mortar Mixers. This we learn from the Regulations for the Arts and Trades of Paris, drawn up by Stephen Boileau and contained in the 48th chapter of his *Livre des Métiers*.

We shall find it interesting to compare these Regulations of the French Freemasons, drawn up or copied as is said by Boileau from the older ones enacted by St. Eloy, with the statutes or constitutions of the English Freemasons contained in their Old Records. We have therefore inserted below a translation of them from the *Livre des Métiers*.

REGULATIONS OF THE FREEMASONS, STONECUTTERS, PLAISTERERS, AND MORTAR MIXERS

- 1. Whosoever desires may be a Master at Paris provided that he knows the trade and works according to the usages and customs of the Craft.
- ¹ Roman emperor, born A.D. 245, died 313. Famous as a general but the persecution of Christians has left a great stain upon his record.



- 2. No one can have more than one Apprentice and he can not take him for less than six years of service, but he may take him for a longer period and for money (a fee) if he has it. If he takes him for a less period than six years he is subject to a fine of twenty sous of Paris, to be paid to the Chapel of St. Blaise, except only that he should be his son born in lawful wedlock.
- 3. A Freemason may take another Apprentice, as soon as the other has accomplished five years of his service, for the same period that the other had been taken.
- 4. The present King, on whom may God bestow a happy life, has given the Mastership of the Freemasons to Master William de Saint Pater, during his pleasure. The said Master William swore at Paris in the lodges of the Pales before said, that he would to the best of his power, well and loyally protect the Craft, the poor as well as the rich, the weak as well as the strong, as long as it was the King's pleasure that he should protect the Craft aforesaid. Then Master William took the form of oath aforesaid, before the Prevost of Paris in the Châtelet (or town hall).
- 5. The Mortar Masters and the Plaisterers have the same condition and standing, in all things as the Freemasons.
- 6. The Master who presides over the Craft of Freemasons, of Mortar Mixers and of Plaisterers, of Paris, by the King's order may have two Apprentices, but only on the conditions before said, and if he should have more, he will be assessed in the manner above provided for.
- 7. The Freemasons, the Mortar Mixers and the Plaisterers may have as many assistants and servants as they please so long as they do not in any point teach them the mystery of the Trade.
- 8. Every Freemason, every Mortar Mixer and every Plaisterer must swear on the Gospels that he will maintain and do well and loyally to the Craft, each in his place, and that if he knows that any one is doing wrong and not acting according to the usages and Craft aforesaid he will every time make it known, under his oath, to the Master.
- 9. The Master whose Apprentice has completed his time of service, must go before the Master of the Craft and declare that his Apprentice has finished his time well and faithfully; and the Master who presides over the Craft must make the Apprentice



swear on the Gospels that he will conform well and truly to the usages and customs of the Craft.

- 10. No one should work at the aforesaid trade on days when flesh may be eaten after nones have been sounded at Notre Dame (i.e., 3 o'clock in the afternoon) and on Saturday in Lent after Vespers have been chanted at Notre Dame unless it be on an arch, or to close a stairway or door opening on the street. If any one should work after the aforesaid hours except in the above mentioned works of necessity he shall pay a fine of four deniers to the Master who presides over the Craft and the Master may take his tools for the fine.
- 11. The Mortar Mixers and the Plaisterers are under the jurisdiction of the Master aforesaid appointed by the king to preside.
- 12. If a Plaisterer should send any man plaister to be used in a work, the Freemason who is working for him to whom the plaister is sent, should by his oath, take care that the measure of the plaister is good and lawful; and if he suspects the measure he should measure the plaister or cause it to be measured in his presence. If he finds that the measure is not good, the plaisterer must pay a fine of 5 sous; that is to say, 2 sous to the Chapel of St. Blaise, 2 sous to the Master who presides over the Craft and 11 (12?) deniers to him who has measured the plaister. And he to whom the plaister was delivered shall rebate from each sack that he shall receive in that work, as much as should have been in that which was measured in the beginning. But where there is only one sack, it shall not be measured.
- 13. No one can become a Plaisterer at Paris unless he pays 5 sous to the Master who by the King's order presides over the Craft. When he has paid the 5 sous he must swear on the Gospels that he will mix nothing but plaister with his plaister, and that he will deliver good and true measure.
- 14. If the Plaisterer puts anything which he ought not in his plaister, he shall be fined 5 sous, to be paid to the Master every time that he is detected. If the Plaisterer makes it a practice to do this, and will not submit to fine or punishment, the Master may exclude him from the Craft. If he will not leave the Craft at the Master's order, the Master must make it known to the Prevost of Paris, and the Prevost must compel the Plaisterer to quit the Craft aforesaid.



- 15. The Mortar Mixer must swear before the Master and before other representatives of the Craft, that he will make Mortar only out of good limestone. If he makes it of any other kind of stone or if the mortar is made of limestone but of inferior quality he should be reprimanded and should pay a fine of 4 deniers to the Master of the Craft.
- 16. A Mortar Mixer can not take an Apprentice for a less time of service than six years and a fee of 100 sous for teaching him the trade.
- 17. The Master of the Craft has general control and the infliction of fines over the Freemasons, Plaisterers, and Mortar Mixers, their assistants and apprentices, as it will be the King's pleasure, as well as over those who intrude into their trades and over the infliction of corporal punishment without drawing blood and over the right of protest, or immediate arrest and trial if it did not affect property.
- 18. If any one of the Craft departs before the Master of the Craft, if he is in contempt he must pay a fine of 4 deniers to the Master. If he returns and asks admission he should give a pledge. If he does not pay before night, there is a fine of 4 deniers to the Master. If he refuses and acts wrongly, there is a fine of 4 deniers.
- 19. The Master who presides over the Craft, can inflict only a fine for a quarrel. If he who has been fined is so hot and foolish that he will not obey the commands of the Master nor pay the fine, the Master may suspend him from the Craft.
- 20. If any one who has been suspended or expelled from the Craft by the Master works at the trade after his exclusion, the Master may taken away his tools and retain them until he pays a fine. If he offers resistance, the Master must make it known to the Prevost of Paris, who must overcome the resistance.
- 21. The Freemasons and the Plaisterers are liable to do watch, to pay taxes, and are subject to all the duties which the other citizens of Paris, owe to the King.
- 22. The Mortar Mixers are exempt from watching, and also the Stonecutters as the leaders of the Craft have heard said from father to son from the time of Charles Martel.
- 23. The Master, who by the King's order presides over the Craft, is freed from watching because of what he does in presiding over the Craft.



24. He who is over sixty years old, or whose wife is dead, ought not to serve on the watch; but he ought to make it known to the King's Keeper of the Watch.

From these Statutes we learn that there was an officer who presided over the Craft in general, and who in many respects resembled the Chief Warden or Master of the Work of the Scottish Freemasons and the similar officer among the English, upon whom Anderson has bestowed the title of Grand Master. He was appointed by the King, and in the Regulations is sometimes called "the Master who protects the Craft" (le mestre qui garde le mestier), and sometimes "the Master of the Craft" (le mestre du mestier).

In course of time this official was styled "Master and General of the Works and Buildings of the King in the Art of Masonry," and still later he was known as the "Master General of the Buildings, Bridges and Roads of the King."

We find it is worthy of notice that one of these Regulations refers to a privilege as having been enjoyed by the Craft according to an unbroken tradition from the time of Charles Martel. This reference to the great Mayor of the Palace as being connected with Freemasonry, in a French document of the 13th century, and which is believed to have a much earlier origin, gives weight to the belief in the story of the connection of Charles Martel with Freemasonry. Of course we allude to the doings credited to him in the legend as being taken by the English Freemasons from those French builders who both history and tradition agree in saying brought their art into England at a very early period.

The mixing-up of the name of Charles Martel the Warrior with that of his grandson Charlemagne, the Civilizer — if confusion there was, as is strongly to be suspected — must be due to the French and not to the English Freemasons.

The Statutes of the Community, Corporation, or Gild of Freemasons were confirmed by Charles IX. and Henry IV. in the 16th, and by Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. in the 17th century. A great many letters-patent and decrees of the King's Council are in existence. These decisions define the various powers of the Masters-General of the Buildings, and they contain regulations that release the Freemasons from all judicial summonses



and from all judgments pronounced against them in other districts, remitting them to the Masters-General of the Buildings as their natural judges.

Some of these letters-patent related to the policies of the Craft. Thus those of 1574 required that Apprentices should be received by the Warden (Maître Garde), and regulated the fee which should be paid under various circumstances. By an edict of October, 1574, sworn Master Masons were appointed as assistants to the Warden, who were to visit and inspect the works in Paris and the suburbs. These were at first twenty in number, but in course of time they were increased to sixty.

The Master-General of the Buildings had two districts, one which had existed for several centuries, and the other, which was established in the year 1645. The seat of the former was at Paris, in the Châtelet; that of the latter at Versailles.

Three architects, says Lacroix, bore the title of "King's Counsellors, Architects, and Masters-General of the Buildings," and they used their powers year by year. They decided all disputes between the employers and the workmen and between the workmen themselves. Their courts were held on Mondays and Fridays, and there was always the possibility of an appeal from their judgment to the national parliament.

The result of the Revolution in 1789 was to proclaim the freedom of labor, set aside all the corporation laws, and permit the workmen to be clear from any sort of restraint, while at the same time they were deprived of all special privileges.

Even in our own generation, the Operative Freemasons of France constitute a large fraternity. They have a kind of organization, but singularly enough they form the only body of workmen not practicing the system of *compagnage* or fellowship adopted by the other trades.

However, they have their legends, and pretend that they are the successors of the Tyrians who labored at the building of the Temple in Jerusalem, calling themselves, therefore, the children of Solomon.

But they have no corporate or chartered existence and must be considered as working only on an independent and voluntary principle. There is, apparently, nothing much alike between them and the *Compagnons de la Tour*, or brotherhoods of the other



handicrafts in France. According to Larousse, they do not possess nor practice the *topage*, the challenge or formula of greeting by which the members of any one of these fraternities are able to know and welcome each other when meeting in a strange place.

The sketch of the progress of architecture as a science and its practical development in the art of building in Gaul and in France, as presented in this chapter, shows us that the origin of the French Freemasons can not be traced as precisely as we do that of the German and British.

The historian of French Freemasonry, Dr. Emanuel Rebold, says, correctly, that the Masonic corporations never presented in France the peculiar character that they had in England and Scotland, and that because of this fact their influence on the progress of civilization in France was much less than in those countries.¹

He further affirms that the custom adopted by the architectural institutions, of accepting men of learning and social standing as patrons or honorary members, appears to have resulted in France, as it had in other countries, namely, in the formation, outside of the corporations, of Lodges for the teaching of the humane objects of the institution. He adds that when the Masonic corporations were dissolved in France at the beginning of the 16th century, Lodges of this nature appear then to have existed.

All this is, however, mere supposition—a belief that is not well supported as historical fact. Rebold himself admits that there is no longer any trace to be found of these Speculative Lodges.²

In fact, we are rather inclined to the belief that there never was in France that steady growth of Speculative out of Operative Freemasonry which took place in England and in Scotland.

The Speculative Freemasonry of France came to it, not out of any change in or by any action of the Masonic Gilds or corporations, by which they abandoned their Operative and assumed a Speculative character. The Speculative Lodges, the Lodges of Free and Accepted Freemasons, which we find springing up in Paris about that time, were due to a direct importation from London and under the authority of the Speculative Grand Lodge of England.



¹ "Histoire des Trois Grandes Loges," p. 31. Paris, 1864.

² "Nous n'en trouvons plus aucune trace." See the above work.

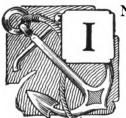
This conclusion does not mean that we can not find a curious and informing parallel to our Craft in the old French organization of workmen. Especially is this true of the Compagnons de la Tour already mentioned. The method of gaining admission, the government of the several bodies, the respect for the Deity — these and other coincidences between Freemasonry and that series of ceremonies and principles found in the "Companions" of the French fraternities as well as the common enmity shown to both organizations by the Roman Catholic Church, afford a foundation so much akin and alike in many directions that one can not but be surprised that they did not evolve in almost exactly the same way. However, we must take the facts as we find them, and they are indeed quite different even in such closely related countries as England and France.¹

The history of the rise and progress of Speculative Freemasonry in France comprises, therefore, a distinct topic, to be treated in another chapter. But we must first discuss the condition of Freemasonry in other countries and at other epochs.

¹ Consult on this point "Le Livre du Compagnonnage," by Agricol Perdiguier, 1841.

CHAPTER SIXTY

THE TRAVELING FREEMASONS OF LOMBARDY
OR THE MASTERS OF COMO



N the effort to trace the gradual growth of the modern system of Speculative Freemasonry out of the ancient organization of the Operatives, our attention is arrested by an important era. We refer to the time when, as is often claimed, the Gilds of Architects and Builders issued about the 10th century from the north

of Italy and under the name of "Traveling Freemasons," went over Europe, and with the favor of the churches extended the principles of their art into every country from Germany to Scotland.

One point in particular must be considered before we can properly appreciate the events connected with the origin of this body of organized Freemasons as the trustworthy link which connects the artificers or Craftsmen of the Roman Colleges with the Masonic Gilds which sprang up in Gaul, in Germany, and in Britain. We shall therefore take a brief view of the condition of the Roman Empire in respect to the cultivation of the arts at the time of the decline of that nation and after the seat of government had been removed from Rome to Byzantium.

Thomas Hope has devoted some thirty pages of his *Historical Essay on Architecture* to an investigation of the circumstances which toward the end of the 10th century affected architecture, generally and extensively, throughout Europe. To this admirable inquiry we are indebted for many of the details and ideas to be found in the present chapter.

Hope remarks that the architecture of Christian Greece and Rome, that is to say, the Byzantine and the Roman styles, exhibited, while it was confined within the limits bounded by the Alps, more local varieties than after it had crossed the mountain ranges



and advanced successively through France and Germany to the farthest inhabited regions of northern Europe.¹

But this advancement from the plains of Italy into more northern regions was accompanied by a style of architecture the adoption of which was at once the cause and the effect of that united action which distinguished the Freemasons of the Middle Ages. Therefore it will be necessary to give a brief glance at the condition of architecture in the times which preceded the going forth of such artists from Italy.

We must remember that it is impossible to trace with any prospect of certainty the progress of events which finally led to the institution of Speculative Freemasonry, unless we direct our attention to the early history of Operative Freemasonry.

Speculative and Operative Freemasonry never were and never can be identical—a mistake into which early Masonic historians like Dr. Anderson have fallen. Yet it must always be remembered that the former came by a process of mental growth and extension out of the latter. Operative Freemasonry is the foundation and Speculative Freemasonry the structure which has been erected on it.

Such is the theory advanced in the present work. This theory is to be preferred in the main to that which traces a connection of the modern society with any of the religious institutions of antiquity.

The old Freemasonry of the mediæval builders, which was essentially Operative in its character, is the principal foundation on which is built the Freemasonry of the modern philosophers, which is essentially Speculative in type. We can not pretend to write a history of the building and at the same time fail to discuss the underlying support.

We shall find necessary, therefore, to look into the history of architecture and at its condition before and after the 10th century. If we do not examine the subject in this way we shall fail to understand how Freemasonry in the beginning of the 18th century was changed from an Operative to a Speculative system, from what was mainly the building art and trade to a philosophical system.

There has been noted a striking evidence of the union of principles which began to distinguish the architects of and after the



¹ "Historical Essay on Architecture," by Thomas Hope, p. 220, London, 1840.

10th century, who called themselves Freemasons. We refer to the fact that in the time of Cæsar a house in Helvetia or Switzerland differed more from a dwelling in the northern part of Italy, though the regions were near to each other, than the church built in England or Sweden did from one erected in Sicily or Palestine, widely separated as the countries were apart.¹

Now let it be remembered that this unity of design was introduced by the Traveling Freemasons. These Craftsmen received a knowledge of the great principles of the art of building from the artificers sent by the Roman Colleges, in company with the Legions of the Roman army, into all the conquered provinces and who there established colonies. The Traveling Freemasons gave their knowledge to the Stonemasons of Germany, France, England, Scotland, and other countries which they visited in pursuit of employment and in the practice of their craft. Finally, that those Stonemasons having from time to time, for purposes of their own progress in the social and financial world, admitted non-professional, that is to say non-masonic members into their ranks, the latter eventually overcame the former in numbers and in influence and changed the Operative into a Speculative institution.

These points give the true theory of the origin of modern Freemasonry, as it were, in a nutshell.² Remembering these facts it will be at once seen how necessary it is that the Masonic student should be thoroughly acquainted with the history of these mediæval Craftsmen and with the character of the architecture which they invented, with the nature of the organization which they established, and with the method of building which they practiced.

To attain a complete view of this subject it is necessary that we should, in the first place, refer to the history of the kingdom of Lombardy, which is admitted to have been the cradle of mediæval architecture.

At the close of the 5th century, the Ostrogoths, prompted and supported by the jealousy of the Byzantine Emperor, had invaded Italy under the celebrated Theodoric. Odoacer, who then ruled



¹ Hope, "Historical Essay on Architecture," p. 220.

² George Möller's "Memorials of German Gothic Architecture." Translation by W. H. Leeds, London, 1836, p. 17.

³ The Western Goths who lived on the shores of the Black Sea.

over the Roman Empire of the East, having been treacherously slain, Theodoric was proclaimed King of Italy by the Goths. He reigned for thirty-three years, during the greater part of which long period he was noted for his religious toleration, his administration of justice, and the patronage of the arts.

There is an interesting comment on the period written by Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus, who was the Chancellor of Theodoric. The Minister describes, with glowing praise, the exalted condition of architecture during the reign of that King. Tiraboschi, who cites the passage in his History of the Sciences in Italy, credits this flourishing state of the art to the influence of the Goths. But Möller, in his Memorials of German Gothic Architecture, dissents from this view, especially as the Gothic control in Italy lasted scarcely more than half a century. He contends that were it even capable of proof that architecture had been at that time such as Cassiodorus describes it, the fact is to be ascribed rather to the Byzantine Romans, among whom Möller thinks that we must search for all that, at that era, was preserved of the city and the sciences.

The Goths were finally driven out of Italy in the reign of Justinian, and by the armies of the famous Belisarius. This event occurred about the middle of the 6th century.

They were succeeded by another tribe of semi-barbarians, who, though they did not, as the Ostrogoths had done, assume the control of the whole of the Italian peninsula, yet exerted an influence on the state of mediæval architecture that produced results of most interesting character.

The Longobardi, a word which by a generally accepted meaning signifies the "Longbeards," a title they obtained from their manner of wearing that growth upon the face, were a Scandinavian tribe who, coming down from their almost arctic home, first settled on the eastern banks of the River Elbe. Gradually they extended their movement southwardly until in the year 568 they invaded Italy, and founded in its northeastern part the kingdom which to this day bears the name of Lombardy.

The kingdom of Lombardy existed in a condition of prosperity for two hundred years. Finally, the kingdom was wiped out toward the end of the 8th century, in 774, from the roll of independent governments by the victorious arms of Charlemagne.



During that period it had been governed by one-and-twenty kings. Several of these displayed great talents and left monuments in the wisdom and prudence of the laws they gave to the kingdom.¹

At the time of their first invasion under Alboin, their King, the Longobards, or, as they were more briefly called, the Lombards, who were a fierce and warlike people, were pagans, and inflicted many cruelties on the Roman Christians. But their manners became gradually more mild, and in the year 587, Anthairs, their third king, accepted Christianity according to the faith of the Arians, who held that the Son was a created being. His successor adopted the orthodox creed.

The germs of the interference of the Church with the arts and sciences and the control of architecture were first planted in the 6th century. During the repeated inroads of barbarians, the gradual decline and then the fall of the power of the Roman Empire, and the continued wars, the arts and sciences would have been totally lost had they not found a place of refuge among the priests, the bishops, and the societies of monks.

Whatever there was remaining of the old culture was preserved from perishing in the monasteries, the churches, and the dwellings of the churchmen. Schools were set up in the cathedral churches, in which youths were instructed by the bishop, or someone appointed by him, in the knowledge of the seven liberal arts and sciences. In the monasteries the monks and nuns devoted as a part of their training and discipline a certain portion of their time to reading the works of the ancient doctors, or in copying and circulating manuscripts of classical as well as Christian writers.

To these establishments, says Mosheim, are we indebted for the preservation and possession of all the ancient authors who thus escaped the fury of barbaric ignorance.²

Architecture, which because its principles were generally and almost exclusively applied to the construction of churches and other religious edifices, had become almost a sacred art, was at



¹ J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi, "Histoire des Republiques Italiennes du Moyen Age," tome i, p. 14. Charles Butler says that no ancient code of law is more famous than the Law of the Lombards; none discovers more evident traces of the feudal policy. It survived the destruction of that empire by Charlemagne, and is said to be in force even now in some cities of Italy. See "Horse Judicæ Subsecivæ," p. 85.

² "Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern," by John Lawrence Mosheim.

first and for a long time under the entire control of the clergy. The laity or common people were either an ignorant peasantry or soldiers trained to war; the ecclesiastics, the officials of the Church, alone exercised the arts, and especially that of architecture. Missionaries sent out to teach the Christian faith carried with them into the fields of their labor builders whom they directed in the construction of the new churches which they made their converts erect.¹

Ecclesiastical writers have remarked upon the surprising number of churches which, under the influence of religious enthusiasm, were erected all over Europe, but more especially in Gaul and Italy at so early a period as the 6th century.

Lombardy, as Hope has remarked, is "the country in which associations of Freemasons were first formed, and which from its more recent civilization afforded few ancient temples whence materials might be supplied, was the first after the decline of the Roman Empire to endow architecture with a complete and connected system of forms, which soon prevailed wherever the Latin Church spread its influence from the shores of the Baltic to those of the Mediterranean." ²

Möller, a learned writer on architecture,³ asserts that the Lombards were much in the habit of building, and appear to have quickly attained a higher degree of civilization than the Goths, to whom they succeeded. As a proof of their skill and architectural culture we may refer to D'Agincourt's History of Art by its Monuments,⁴ where is exhibited a plate of the church of St. Julia near Bergamo, that of St. Michael at Pavia, and that of the round church of St. Momus, all of which he credits to the Lombards. Hope also lists among the churches erected in what he calls the Lombard style the Basilica of St. Eustorgio, which was built in the 7th or 8th century.

But, as in the case of the Goths, Möller claims that whatever there was of excellence in Lombardian architecture was not due to the Lombards themselves, who were originally a rude, invading



¹ "Historical Essay on Architecture," p. 213.

² "Historical Essay on Architecture," p. 250.

³ Möller's "Memorials of German Gothic Architecture," translated by W. H. Leeds, London, 1836, p. 18.

^{4&}quot;L'Histoire de l'Art par les Monuments," Pl. xxiv.

people who adopted the civilized manners as well as the architecture of the people whom they conquered, but to the Byzantine Romans.

Other writers on this subject do not agree with Moller in this view.¹ We can not deny that there was a constant influx of Grecian artists from Byzantium into Lombardy. Unquestionably these Craftsmen must have influenced the local condition of the arts by their superior skill. It can not be doubted that at the time of the extinction of their kingdom the people of Lombardy had attained a very considerable share of civilization, and had made much progress in the art of building. This is evident from the few monuments that still remain as well as from the fact that Charlemagne made but little change in their government when he established his Lombard Empire by their conquest.

Nicholson speaks of these Lombards in terms of approval. He says that "Italy does not seem to have suffered much but rather the reverse from their government, and during their possession the arts flourished and were cultivated with greater success than during the periods either immediately preceding or following. It is certain that they gave a great impetus to building, for during the two hundred years of their sway the northern and central portions of Italy had become studded with churches and baptisteries."²

Therefore, we may safely say that the ancient architecture of the Romans derived from their Colleges of Artificers was imitated by the Lombards and with its improvements brought to them from Byzantium by Grecian architects was later on extended over Europe.

But it was only after the conquest of Lombardy by Charlemagne that that province began to assume that high place in architecture which was won for it by the labors of the builders who spread over all Europe the principles of the new style which they had invented.

This style of building, which was known as the Lombard from the place of its origin, differed from both the Roman and the Byzantine, though it used and adapted portions of each of these models of architecture.



¹ Sismondi, "Histoire des Republiques Italiennes du Moyen Age," ch. i.

² "Dictionary of Architecture," by Peter Nicholson. See article on Lombardii Architecture.

Notwithstanding that the rule over Lombardy by Charlemagne, a king whose genius in acquiring empires was equalled by his prudence in preserving them, must have tended to advance the civilization of the inhabitants, the long succession of a race of inferior descendants had a retarding effect. Not until two centuries after his death did the architects of Lombardy establish that reputation as builders which has so closely connected their labors with the history of Freemasonry in the Middle Ages.

We have already seen, when the subject was treated in a previous part of this work, that the Roman Colleges of Artificers continued to exist in all their vigor until the end of the Empire. The inroads of the hordes of barbarians which led to that result had lessened their numbers and weakened their organization, so long as paganism was the religion of the State. But when the people were converted to Christianity, the Colleges, under the new name of Corporations, began once more to flourish. The bishops and priests, who were admitted and accepted as patrons and honorary members, soon assumed the control of them and they set to work the architects and builders in the construction of churches, cathedrals, monasteries, and other religious edifices.

What Whittington has said of Gaul, may with equal truth be applied to the other parts of Europe. The people were degraded, the barons only half civilized, commerce had not yet elevated the lower classes, and the arts had made but little progress among the higher ones. Therefore, it was chiefly through the Church that the art of building was revived, a practice which under barbaric influences had previously gone on to its decay.

All the writers who have made this subject a study agree in asserting the great influence of the clergy in the practice and teaching of mediæval architecture. Fergusson goes so far as to say that in the 13th century the masons, though skilled in hewing and setting stones and acquainted with all the inventions and improvements in their art, never exercised their calling, except under the guidance of some superior person, who was a bishop, an abbot, or an accomplished layman.²



¹ "Historical Survey of the Ecclesiastical Antiquities of France," by Rev. G. D. Whittington. London, 1811, p. 19.

² "History of Architecture in all Countries," etc., vol. i, p. 479.

This too broad assertion, however, not entirely in accord with the fact that in France alone in the 13th century, to say nothing of England, Italy, or Germany, there were many architects who, though neither bishops nor abbots, both designed and built great works. Such, for instance, as Hugues Libergier, the builder of the Cathedral of Rheims, Robert de Lusarches, the builder of the Cathedral of Amiens, and Eudes de Montreuil who, says Whittington, was "an artist equally remarkable for his scientific knowledge and the boldness of his conceptions. He accompanied St. Louis in his expeditions to the Holy Land, where he fortified the city and port of Joppa, and on his return to France, was employed by the King in the constructing of several religious buildings." 1

The important place occupied by the Church in the revival of architecture can not, however, be too highly estimated. Though it would be an error to suppose that there were no laymen who were architects, it must be confessed that the most eminent officials of the Church made architecture a study, and that in the construction of religious houses, the bishops or abbots designed the plans and the monks executed them. Even if the architect and the masons were laymen, the house was almost always built under the superintendence and direction of some Churchman of high rank.

The view taken by this author is the one that is historically the most likely to be true. Whittington's language is worthy of quotation:

"In those ages of barbarism, when the lay portion of the community was fully employed in warfare and devastation, when churches and convents were the only retreats of peace and security, they also became the chief foci or centers of productive industry. Convents have long been celebrated as the chief asylums of letters in those ages. They also deserve to be remembered as the sole conservators of art; not only painting, sculpture, enameling, engraving, and portraiture, but even architecture was chiefly exercised in them; and the more as the edifices which showed any elegance of skill were only required for sacred purposes. In every region where a religious order wanted a new church or convent, it was an ordinary thing for the superior, the

1 "Historical Survey," p. 68.



We hold it to be important that the reader should be thoroughly impressed with the position and the services of the clergy in the architecture of the Middle Ages. These facts account for the character of the institution of Stonemasons, who succeeded the artists of official rank as Churchmen, and who though released from the direct service of the Church still remained under its influence. This is well shown in the symbols used by them in the decoration of the buildings which they erected, most of which belong to a Christian type of design, in the charters and constitutions by which they were governed, which teach religious faith and respect for the Church, and finally in the handing on of a religious character to the Speculative Freemasons who succeeded them, and of whose institution it has been said that if Freemasonry be not a universal religion, it becomes a servant to every worthy system of faith.

The only difference between the Freemasonry of today and that of the 10th or the 11th century, in respect to the question of religion is that the former is world-wide of application and universal in its creed, whose only unalterable points are the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, while the latter was strictly Christian according to the orthodox form in its belief and practice.

Notwithstanding the change from intolerance to liberality of sentiment which the progress of the age has introduced, it must never be forgotten that whatever there is of a religious or sacred character in the constitution or the ritual of the Freemasonry of today must be traced to the influences of the Church over the Operatives of the Middle Ages.

But it is necessary to resume the thread of our history. At the beginning of the 11th century Lombardy was an active center of civilization in Europe. It had prospered under the free institutions of its kings for two centuries, and on the uprooting of the royal line, the people shared in the benefits of the farsighted policy and prudent government of their conqueror, Charlemagne.

The workmen of Lombardy still maintained the relics of those



¹ "Historical Essay," p. 222.

ancient fraternities which had carried under the Roman control the principles and practices of the Colleges of Artificers into the conquered provinces of the Empire.

The policy of the kings had led them to give various craftsmen the sole privilege of exercising their own trades, and under the form of Gilds or Corporations to establish bodies, which were governed by peculiar laws, and which were sought to be kept alive by the introduction into them of youths who were to be instructed by the Masters, so that having served a due period of preparation and initiation as Apprentices, they might become associates and workers in the Gild or Corporation.

This was the way that at that time all trades and professions were organized. Insofar as respects the union in a corporation endowed with peculiar privileges, the Freemasons did not differ essentially from the shoemakers, the hatters, or the tailors. Each body had its Masters, its Wardens, or similar officers, and each was governed by its own laws and was recruited from a body of Apprentices.¹

There was, however, one very important difference between the Freemasons and the other Crafts. This peculiarity was the cause of singular results.

This difference between the organizations arose from the nature of the work which was to be done, and which affected the relations of the Craftsmen to each other.

The trade of the tailor or the shoemaker was local. The custom was obtained from the place in which he lived. The members of the Corporation or Gild all knew each other. They lived in the same town or city — and their Apprentices, having accomplished their time of service and gone forth to see the world, almost always returned home and settled among their relatives and their friends.

Hence the work done by these trades was work that came to them. Their work was brought to them by the neighbors who lived around them. Every shoemaker in a city knew every other shoemaker in the same place; every tailor was familiar with the face, the life, and the character of every other tailor. While such intimacy existed there was no necessity for the establishment of any peculiar guards against impostors, for the trades of tailoring



¹ Fergusson, "History of Architecture," vol. i, p. 477.

and shoemaking were seldom troubled with the presence of strangers.

But it was not so with the Freemasons. Theirs was not a local craft. Work did not come to them, but they had to go to the work. Whenever a building was to be erected which required a force of workmen beyond the number who resided usually near the place, Freemasons had to be sent for from the nearby towns and districts, and sometimes from even much greater distances.

There was therefore a great necessity for caution in the admission of these "strangers among the workmen" lest some should intrude who were not legally entitled to employment by having acquired a knowledge of the craft in the regular way; that is, by having passed through the period of an apprenticeship to some lawful Master.

Hence there arose the necessity of adopting secret modes of recognition. By such means a stranger might be known on his first appearance as a member of the Craft, as a true Craftsman, or be at once detected as an impostor.

Fergusson has adopted this view of the origin of signs and passwords among the Freemasons. As a scholar of much research, but who, not being a member of the modern fraternity, obtains his opinions and deductions from history unconnected with any Gild traditions, his remarks are interesting. He says:

"At a time when writing was almost wholly unknown among the laity, and not one Mason in a thousand could either read or write, it is evidently essential that some expedient should be hit upon by which a Mason traveling to his work might claim assistance and hospitality of his brother Masons on the road, by means of which he might take his rank at once on reaching the lodge without going through tedious examinations or giving practical proofs of his skill. For this purpose a set of secret signs was invented which enabled all Masons to recognize one another as such, and by which also each man could make known his grade to those of similar rank without further trouble than a manual sign, or the utterance of some recognized password. Other trades had something of the same sort, but it never was necessary for them to carry it either to the same extent nor to practice it so often as Masons, they being, for the most part, resident in the same place and knowing each other personally."1



¹ "History of Architecture," vol. i, p. 478.

Freemasonry was therefore in the following condition at the beginning of the 11th century, so far as respects the Kingdom of Lombardy, to which the honor has been universally assigned of being the center from which the Masonic corporations spread abroad into the rest of Europe.

Lombardy was, as has already been shown, the active center whence the arts and sciences were sent out into other countries. Architecture, as one of the most useful of the arts and one of an almost sacred character from its service in the construction of religious edifices, took a leading place among the Crafts that were cultivated in that country. Schools of architecture and corporations of architects, principally officials of the Church, were formed. These, passing into other countries and spreading abroad the principles of their science which they had acquired in the schools at home, have been hence known in history by the title of the "Traveling Freemasons of the Middle Ages."

Among these schools of Craftsmen one of the most distinguished was that of Como.

The ancient city of Comum, lying at the southern extremity of the Lacus Larius, now called the Lake of Como, was, even under the Empire, a place of some distinction, as it had obtained from Cæsar the full powers of a Roman community. Probably it was the birthplace of the elder and the younger Pliny. Certainly it was the favorite residence of the latter, who writes of it in one of his letters to Canidius Rufus in words of tender fondness, calling it his darling. "What," he says, "is doing at Como, our darling?" 1

Pliny established there a school of learning, and at an early period it was noted for its foundries of iron. Como retained its prosperity until the fall of the Empire, and continued in a flourishing condition with the Goths and under the Lombards. During the Middle Ages it retained its importance and is still active and thriving.

The architectural school of Como was of such repute in the 10th century that, according to Muratori, the historian of Italy, the name of *Magistri Comacini*, or Masters from Como, came to be the general name for all these associations of architects.

The influx of Grecian artists from Byzantium into Italy at that time was, most probably, one of the means by which the

1 "Quid agit Comum, tum mem que delicim?" Pliny, "Epistles," lib. i, cap. 3.



We find a curious illustration of this fact in the Legend of the Craft, where Charles Martel, evidently a mistake for Charlemagne, is said to have been indebted for the improvements in architecture or Freemasonry in his Kingdom to the visit of Naimus Grecus. We have shown, in the first part of this work, that this expression simply means "a certain Greek." The legend thus recognized the circumstance that Europe was instructed in architecture by the Greeks of Byzantium, who visited Italy and Gaul.

The labors of these Freemasons could not long be confined within the narrow limits of Lombardy. Rich as it was and well peopled, it could not fail to be completely fitted with churches and religious houses. Thus in time the need and the means of building more of such structures must have become exhausted.

Then there was no further demand for their services at home. They looked beyond the Alps, which formed their northern boundary, for new fields in which to exercise their skill and to avail themselves of the exclusive privileges which they are said to have possessed.

A certain number, says Hope, united and formed themselves into a single greater association or fraternity. This body, he says, proposed to seek for occupation beyond its native land, and in any ruder, foreign region, however remote, where new religious edifices and skillful artists to erect them were wanted, to offer their services and bend their steps to undertake the work. The connection of these Freemasons with the Church forms an interesting and important part of their history.

Governor Pownall, in an article on this subject in the Archaelogia, was one of the first to make the statement that the origin of Freemasonry as an organized institution is to be traced to the builders who issued from Italy about the 12th century and traveled all over Europe, spreading the principles of their art and erecting religious buildings under the patronage of the Pope. He writes as follows: "The churches throughout all the northern parts of

¹ "Historical Essay," pp. 230, 231.



Europe being in a ruinous state, the Pope created several corporations of Roman or Italian architects and artists, with corporate powers and exclusive privileges, particularly with a power of setting by themselves the prices of their own work and labor, independent of the municipal laws of the country wherein they worked, according as Hiram had done by the corporations of architects and mechanics which he sent to Solomon. The Pope not only thus formed them into such a corporation, but is said to have sent them (as exclusively appropriated) to repair and rebuild these churches and other religious edifices. This body had a power of taking Apprentices, and of admitting or accepting into their corporation approved *Masons*. It will be found that, claiming to hold primarily and exclusively under the Pope, they assumed a right, as Freemasons, of being exempt from the regulations of the statutes of laborers, laws in England which made regulations for the price of labor; secondly, in order to regulate these matters amongst themselves as well as all matters respecting their corporation, they held general chapters and other congregations. Doing this they constantly refused obedience or to conform themselves to these statutes, which regulated the price of the labor of all other laborers and mechanics, although they were specifically mentioned therein."1

Dr. Henry, the historian, in speaking of them in his *History of Great Britain*, says that "The Popes, for very obvious reasons, favored the erection of churches and convents, and granted many indulgences by their bulls to the Society of Masons in order to increase their numbers. These indulgences produced their full effect in those superstitious times, and that Society became very numerous and raised a prodigious multitude of magnificent churches, about this time, in several countries." ²

Sir Christopher Wren makes the same statement. We quote at length the passage contained in the *Parentalia*. This account not only repeats the statement of Papal favor, but gives a very detailed story of the mode of traveling adopted by these wandering Freemasons and their practices in constructing buildings. His words are:



¹ "Archeologia," p. 117. See article on "Observations on the Origin and Progress of Gothic Architecture."

² "History of Great Britain," by Robert Henry, vol. viii, p. 275.

"We are told by one who was well acquainted with their history and constitutions that the Italians, with some Greek refugees, and with them Frenchmen, Germans, and Flemings, joined into a fraternity of architects, procuring Papal bulls for their encouragement and their particular privileges; they styled themselves Freemasons, and ranged from one nation to another as they found churches to be built; for very many, in those days, were every day building through piety or emulation; their government was regular; and where they fixed near the building in hand, they made a camp of huts. A surveyor governed in chief; every tenth man was called a Warden, and overlooked each nine. The gentlemen in the neighborhood, either out of charity or commutation of penance, gave the materials and carriage. Those who have seen the accounts in records of the charge of the fabrics of some of our cathedrals near four hundred years old, can not but have a great esteem for their economy and admire how soon they erected such lofty structures." 1

Hope is still more explicit in referring to the Papal favor which is said to have been bestowed upon these Traveling Freemasons. He says that when they were no longer restricted in the exercise of their profession to Lombardy, but had begun to travel into the most distant countries, wherever their services as builders might be required, it was found necessary to establish a monoply in the construction of religious edifices by which all Craftsmen, even the natives of the country where they went as strangers were, if not members of their body, to be excluded from employment.

This special privilege was one which no king could give to have effect beyond his own dominions. In all those countries which at that time recognized the Pope as the head of the Church — that is to say in all the countries of Europe — the authority of a Papal bull was the only power by which this monopoly could be universally secured.

According to Hope's point of view, the Freemasons could be regarded only as different troops of laborers working in the cause of the Pope, extending his estates by the erection of new churches. He is of the opinion that the Freemasons thus obtained the requisite powers soon after Charlemagne had put an end to the rule of the Lombards in Italy, and had added that Kingdom to his own Empire.



¹ "Parentalia," or "Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens," p. 306.

"The Masons," as Hope says, "were fraught with Papal bulls or diplomas not only confirming the corporate powers given to them by their own native sovereign, on their own native soil, but granting to them, in every other foreign country which they might visit for purposes connected with their association, where the Latin creed was avowed, and the supremacy of the spiritual head acknowledged, the right of holding directly and solely under the Pope, alone, entire exemption from all local laws and statutes, edicts of the sovereign or municipal regulations, whether with regard to the force of labor or any other binding upon the native subjects. They acquired the power, not only themselves to fix the price of their labor, but to regulate whatever else might appertain to their own internal government, exclusively in their own general chapters; prohibiting all native artists, not admitted into their society, from entering with it into any sort of competition, and all native sovereigns from supporting their subjects in such rebellion against the Church, and commanding all such temporal subjects to respect these credentials and to obey these mandates under pain of excommunication." 1

This statement in reference to the grant of bulls or charters of standing and privilege to the Traveling Freemasons is given by Hope, probably on the authority of Governor Pownall.

In February, 1788, a letter from Governor Pownall was read before the Society of Antiquaries of London, and then was published in the ninth volume of the *Archæologia*, under the title of "Observations on the Origin and Progress of Gothic Architecture, and on the Corporation of Free Masons supposed to be the Establishers of it as a Regular Order."

Governor Pownall commences his letter by the assertion of his belief that the College or Corporation of Freemasons were the formers of Gothic architecture into a regular and scientific order. This they are said to have done by applying the models and proportions of timber frame-work to building in stone. We will not now stop to discuss the question of the correctness of this theory of the origin of the Gothic style. Such a study must be a subject of future consideration. Meanwhile we will proceed to analyze those parts of the letter which refer to the favor shown the Freemasons by the Papal See at Rome.

¹ "Historical Essay on Architecture," p. 232. ² "Archæologia," vol. ix, pp. 110-126.



According to Governor Pownall, the churches throughout all the northern parts of Europe being in a ruinous state, the Pope created several corporations of Roman or Italian architects and artists with chartered powers and exclusive privileges,¹ particularly with a power of setting by themselves the prices of their own work and labor, independent of the local laws of the country wherein they worked. The Pope not only thus formed them into such a corporation, but is said to have sent them with exclusive powers to repair and rebuild the churches and other religious edifices which in several countries had fallen into decay, but also to build new ones when required. In England, where these builders had penetrated at an early period, they were styled "Free and Accepted Masons."

With respect to the historical authority for the existence of this Papal bull, charter, or diploma, which is said to have been issued about the close of the 12th or the beginning of the 13th century, Pownall says that being convinced from "incontrovertible record" that the Corporation of Architects and Masons had been thus instituted, he was very eager to have inquiry and search made among the archives at Rome, to see whether it was not possible to find there some record of the transaction.

Application was accordingly made to the librarian of the Vatican, and the Pope himself is said to have ordered minute search to be made for the document. But the report was that "not the least traces of any such record" could be found.

Governor Pownall, notwithstanding this failure to discover the written authority, thought that some record or copy of the charter must be buried somewhere at Rome amidst forgotten and unknown bundles and rolls — a circumstance which he says had frequently occurred in relation to important English records.

Unfortunately for the positive settlement of the historical question, it by no means follows because the Roman Catholic librarian of the Vatican could not or would not find a bull or diploma which in the 12th century had granted special liberties to an association which the Popes in the 18th century had denounced and excommunicated, that no such bull is in existence.



¹ Although it was never competent for the Pope to create a corporation in England, yet according to John Ayliffe, on the Continent that power was conceded to him and it was shared by him with the governing prince, king or other authority. "Treatise on the Civil Law," p. 210.

This question still divides Masonic writers. Krause, for instance, on the supposed authority of a statement of Elias Ashmole, communicated by Dr. Knipe to the compiler of his Life admits the fact of a Papal charter, while Stieglitz, accepting the unsuccessful application of Pownall to the Vatican librarian, argues for the absurdity of any such claim.

However, the weight of historical authority is in favor of the statement. There is certainly abundant evidence of the submission of these Freemasons to the officials of the Church. And it is not unreasonable to suppose that the entire supervision of church buildings exercised by bishops and abbots, who, as Fergusson says, made the designs while the Freemasons only followed the plans laid down for them, must have been supported by the express authority of the head of the Church.

We therefore conclude that the Traveling Freemasons were at an early period simply the servants of the Church.

Another fact worthy of attention is that the relationship of trade and the frequency of intercourse for other reasons between the various cities of Lombardy and Constantinople brought to Italy many Greeks. Some of these came seeking for employment and others were driven from their homes by political or religious attacks. Among these emigrants were many artists who united with the Masonic Corporations of Lombardy, and infused into them a large portion of their Byzantine art.

These Freemasons, thus armed with the authority of the Pontiff, having been well organized at home, were ready to set forth like missionaries at the call of the Church, to build cathedrals, churches, and monasteries as they might be needed by the growth of the Christian religion. From the 10th to the 12th century, and in some places even earlier, we find them busily at work over Europe and spreading the knowledge of their art in Germany, in France, in England, Scotland, and elsewhere.

The remarks of Hope on the professional wanderings of these Craftsmen of the Middle Ages, though they have the air of romance, are really well supported by historical authority.

"Often obliged," says that pleasing writer, "from regions the



¹ Christian Ludwig Stieglitz, born 1756, died 1836, writer on art, also poet, a native of Leipsig, Germany. He wrote a "History of Architecture from the Earliest Antiquity to Modern Times," "Archeology of the Architecture of the Greeks and Romans," etc.

most distant, singly to seek the common place of rendezvous, and departure of the troop, or singly to follow its earlier detachments to places of employment equally distant, and that at an era when travelers met on the road every obstruction and no convenience, when no inns existed at which to purchase hospitality, but lords dwelt everywhere, who only prohibited their tenants from waylaying the traveler, because they considered this, like killing game, one of their own exclusive privileges. The members of these communities contrived to render their journeys more easy and safe by engaging with each other, and perhaps even in many places, with individuals not directly participating in their profession, in compacts of mutual assistance, hospitality, and good services most valuable to men so circumstanced. They endeavored to compensate for the perils which attended their expeditions, by institutions for their needy or disabled brothers. But lest such as belonged not to their communities should benefit surreptitiously by these arrangements for its advantage, they framed signs of mutual recognition as carefully concealed from the knowledge of the uninitiated as the mysteries of their art themselves.

"Thus supplied with whatever could facilitate such distant journeys and labors as they contemplated, the members of these Corporations were ready to obey any summons with the utmost alacrity, and they soon received the encouragement they anticipated. The militia of the Church of Rome, which diffused itself all over Europe in the shape of missionaries, to instruct nations and to establish their allegiance to the Pope, took care not only to make them feel the want of churches and monasteries, but likewise to learn the manner in which the want might be supplied. Indeed they themselves generally undertook the supply; and it may be asserted that a new apostle of the Gospel no sooner arrived in the remotest corner of Europe, either to convert the inhabitants to Christianity or to introduce among them a new religious order, than speedily followed a tribe of itinerant Freemasons to back him and to provide the inhabitants with the necessary places of worship or reception.

"Thus ushered in, by their interior arrangements assured of assistance and safety on the road; and by the bulls of the Pope and the support of his ministers abroad assured of every species of immunity and preference at the place of their destination;



bodies of Freemasons dispersed themselves in every direction, every day began to advance farther and to proceed from country to country to the utmost verge of the faithful, in order to answer the unceasing demand for them or to seek more distant custom." ¹

One fact peculiarly worthy of remark is that throughout all Europe, from its southern to its northern, from its western to its eastern limit — wherever the Christian religion had penetrated and churches had been erected — a surprising uniformity existed in the style of all edifices wheresoever built at the same period. No better evidence than this could be furnished of the existence of an association whose members, wherever they might be scattered, must have been controlled by the same rules of art.

Sidney Smith mentions this fact where he speaks of this association as having been established in the early part of the 13th century by a Papal bull:

"Thus associated and exclusively devoted to the practice of Masonry, it is easy to infer that a rapid improvement, both in the style and execution of their work, would result. Forming a connected and corresponding society, and roving over the different countries of Europe, wherever the munificent piety of those ages promised employment to their skill, it is probable and even a necessary consequence, that improvements by whomsoever introduced would quickly become common to all; and to this cause we may refer the simultaneous progress of one style throughout Europe which forms so singular a phenomenon in the history of architecture." ²

Hope is still more elaborate in his remarks. He says:

"The architects of all the sacred edifices of the Latin Church, wherever such arose — north, south, east, or west — thus derived their science from the same central school; obeyed, in their designs, the same hierarchy; were directed in their construction by the same principles of propriety and taste; kept up with each other, in the most distant parts to which they might be sent, the most constant correspondence; and rendered every minute improvement the property of the whole body and a new conquest of the art. . . . The result of this unanimity was, that at each successive period of the Masonic dynasty, on whatever point a



¹ "Historical Essay on Architecture," p. 235.

² "Archæologia," vol. xxi, p. 521.

new church or new monastery might be erected, it resembled all those raised at the same period in every other place, however distant from it, as if both had been built in the same place, by the same artist. . . . For instance, we find at particular epochs, churches as far distant from each other as the north of Scotland and the south of Italy more minutely similar than those erected within the single precincts of Rome or Ravenna." 1

Paley speaks of this uniformity of style throughout all countries as one of the most remarkable facts connected with the history of mediæval architecture. He cites Willis, Architecture of the Middle Ages, that whereas in our own age it is the practice to imitate every style of architecture that can be found in all the countries of the earth, it appears that in any given period and place our forefathers admitted but of one style, which was favored above every other during its vogue.

Paley correctly accounts for this by the fact that Freemasonry was in the Middle Ages "a craft in the hands of a corporate ecclesiastical confraternity the members of which seem to have been bound down to certain rules." ²

After what we have already said, it is very evident that this "craft in the hands of a corporate ecclesiastical confraternity" must make a very important link in the great chain connecting the history of Freemasonry in one continued series from the first development of the art in a corporate form in the Colleges of Numa, until that transition period when the Operative was merged in the Speculative element.

Thomas Hope, who devoted much labor to a study of the influences which toward the end of the 10th century affected architecture throughout Europe, wrote an exhaustive chapter on this subject in his *Historical Essay*. It will be sufficient in making a summary of what has been already presented to the reader, to say of these influences he considered the most important to be the establishment of a school of architecture in Lombardy and the organization of Gilds of Builders who, under the name of "Freemasons," traveled the whole continent, passing over to England and Scotland, and taught the art of building under the inspiration of the same principles of architecture, directed by the



¹ "Historical Essay on Architecture," pp. 238, 239.

² "Manual of Gothic Architecture," by Frederick A. Paley, p. 206.

same ideas of taste, and governed by the same Gild spirit of fraternity.

After the appearance of this work by Hope, Lord Lindsay entered the same field of research and presented the public with the result of his inquiries in a book entitled Sketches of the History of Christian Art, from whose pages much interesting information may be gleaned in respect to the condition of mediæval Freemasonry and architecture.

These mediæval Freemasons at first adopted the principles of Byzantine art in their construction of churches and afterward invented that new system known as the Gothic style of architecture. Before the organization of the Lombard school the architecture of Europe was that which had been derived from the builders of Rome. All the churches constructed in Italy, in Gaul, and even as far as Britain, were built upon the model of the Roman basilica, an edifice which in pagan Rome served as a court of law and an exchange, or a place of public meeting for merchants and men of business.

After the religious conversion of the Empire, many of these edifices were converted into Christian places of worship, and "basilica" was used in the Latin of the period to mean a cathedral or city church, and the style was readily adopted and followed in new churches.

The architecture common in Byzantium or Constantinople was very different from the Roman. The principal differences were the four naves as parts of a cross of equal limbs, and especially the dome or cupola, which was, usually, eight-sided.

This style the Lombard Freemasons adopted in part, modifying it with the Roman style, and finally developing the Gothic as a new system peculiarly their own. The history of this style, its progress in various countries, and the gradual changes it underwent, is therefore closely connected with Freemasonry.

The question naturally arises why these Lombard Freemasons, who took their first lessons from the descendants of the old builders in the Roman Colleges of Artificers and who were surrounded by examples of Roman art, should have so materially changed their system as to have given to it a much greater resemblance to the Byzantine than to the Roman style.

The answer to this question will be found not only that between the shores of northern and eastern Italy there was a very fre-



quent, continuous intercourse with Byzantium, but also in the additional fact that the religious architects of Lombardy were very thoroughly imbued with the principles of the science of symbolism, and that they found these principles far better developed in the Byzantine than in the Roman style. "The basilica," says Lord Lindsay, "is far less suggestive, far less symbolical than the Byzantine edifice, and hence the sympathy always manifested for Byzantium by the Lombard architects." 1

How the Freemasons of Lombardy became imbued with the science of symbolism and made it a prominent part of their art of building are questions of very great interest. They refer to the only bond which connects the Speculative Freemasons of the present day with the old Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages. This important topic will be discussed when we consider that period in the history of Freemasonry marked by the change of the Operative into the Speculative institution.

All that is necessary to be said here is that this symbolic style of architecture, beginning in Lombardy somewhere between the 7th and the 10th centuries, spread gradually at first, but rapidly afterwards over the whole of Europe. For this use of a peculiar religious architecture Lord Lindsay gives the following reason:

"What chiefly contributed to its diffusion over Europe was the exclusive monopoly in Christian architecture, conceded by the Popes toward the close of the 8th century, to the Freemasons of Como, then and for ages afterward, when the title Magistri Comacini had long been absorbed in that of Free and Accepted Masons, associated as a craft or brotherhood in art and friendship. A distinct and powerful body, composed, eventually, of all nations, concentrating the talent of each successive generation with all the advantages of accumulated experience and constant mutual communication — imbued, moreover, in that age of faith, with the deepest Christian reverence, and retaining these advantages unchallenged till their proscription in the 15th and 16th centuries — we can not wonder that the Freemasons should have carried their art to a pitch of perfection which, now that their secrets are lost, it may be considered hopeless to attempt to rival." 2



^{1 &}quot;Sketches of Christian Art."

² "Sketches of Christian Art," vol. ii, p. 14.

The result of all these observations strengthens the theory we have maintained of the origin of Freemasonry as a Speculative institution founded on an Operative art. In every country where it has been founded we are able to trace its beginning as a craft organized into a Gild, Corporation, or Fraternity, to the Roman Colleges of Artificers — the *Collegia Fabrorum* — originally established, or said to have been established, by Numa.

Thus we find the architects who came out of these Colleges following the Roman legions in their marches to conquest, settling to work in the colonies, municipalities, and free cities established by the Roman government in the colonies of Gaul and Britain, and keeping active the Roman taste and the Roman workmanship.

So we trace the progress of these Freemasons of Rome in the various colonies where they settled and continued their labors after the Empire had fallen.

Now we see the links of the historical chain more distinctly in the rise and progress of these Masons of Lombardy. Originally, Roman Colleges must have had their seats in the northern part of Italy, that highly favored province, which, more than any other, had received its civilization from the imperial city. Then, when the glory of Rome had departed, the Lombard kings preserved the Roman architecture, and after their conversion to Christianity, practiced it under the favor of the Church.

Then came, toward the 10th century, those Corporations of Freemasons, who, imitating in their form of government the example set by the Colleges, presented themselves as a fraternity of workmen. First having filled their own country with specimens of their skill, at length leaving Como and other cities of Lombardy, they crossed the Alps and gave to other countries the knowledge of that art and the mode of practicing it which they had gained at home.

"An Italian writer, referring to these Gilds (Cesare Cantu Storia di Como), says: 'They were called together in the Loggie (hence Lodge) by a Grand Master to hear of affairs common to the Order, to accept novices, and confer superior degrees on others. The Chief Lodge had other dependencies, and all members were instructed in their duties to the Society and taught to direct every action to the Glory of the Lord and His worship — to live faithful to God and the government — to lend themselves to the



public good and fraternal charity. Strength, force and beauty were their symbols; bishops, princes, men of high rank who studied architecture fraternized with them. From the 10th to the 13th centuries Grand Masters took oaths of discretion and fidelity. Masters coming from other Lodges were received and employed. Apprentices were not paid in the same manner as Craftsmen, and all questions were settled in Council.'

"One other authority under this head may suffice — Signor Agostino Segredio, who, in his work on the building Gilds of Venice, says: 'While we are speaking of the Masonic Companies and their jealous secrecy we must not forget the most grand and potent Gild of the Middle Ages, that of the Freemasons; originating most probably from the builders of Como (Magistri Comacini) it spread beyond the Alps. Popes gave them their benediction, monarchs protected them, and the most powerful thought it an honor to be inscribed in their ranks; they with the utmost jealousy practiced all the arts connected with building, and by severe laws and penalties (perhaps also with bloodshed) prohibited others from the practice of building important edifices. Long and hard were the initiations to aspirants, and mysterious were the meetings and the teaching, and to ennoble themselves they dated their origin from Solomon's Temple.'" 1

One of the first countries to which these Traveling Freemasons came — perhaps the very first — was Germany. There we find, in the 12th century, the Steinmetzen, or the Stonemasons, who appear to have been almost a direct continuation of the Comacine Masters, or Traveling Freemasons of Lombardy. These German Stonemasons played too important a part in the history of Freemasonry to permit them to be passed over without a survey of their rise and progress, and with their wonderful achievements in mediæval Freemasonry or Architecture. The Stonemasons of Germany will be the topic discussed in the following chapter.

¹ "The Comacines, Their Predecessors and Their Successors," by W. Ravenscroft, London, 1910, p. 55. Brother Ravenscroft traces the early building Operatives step by step to the later Gilds and logically concludes that as the Gilds died out, their forms and ceremonies were preserved in our Masonic Lodges.



CHAPTER SIXTY-ONE

THE STONEMASONS OF GERMANY



E must not look in the early history of the Germanic tribes for that gradual and uninterrupted growth of architecture and its cultivation as coming down to them in a direct line from the Roman Colleges. First heard of in the time of Cæsar, the barbarians living in the vast region bounded by the Rhine, the Danube,

the Carpathian Mountains, and the Baltic Sea were described by Tacitus as uneducated and warlike, whose religion was a gross superstition, and who had no knowledge of the arts.

The Roman Colleges, which sent their branches with the legions into Spain and Gaul and Britain, were never in Germany. While those provinces were enjoying Roman civilization, Germany, overspread with forests and bogs, was inhabited by savage tribes ignorant of the arts of peace.

As late as the end of the 3d century Germany was an unconquered province. The Roman emperors engaged not in colonizing the wild region north of the Danube and east of the Rhine, but rather tried to stop the southern progress of the barbarous tribes of the Allemanni from any attack upon Italy.

The Romans built, it is true, several towns on the banks of the Rhine, but in the vast interior area extending from that river to the shores of the Baltic Sea there was hardly a city before the 9th century. To the history of architecture or of its connection with the Roman Empire, there is no early German contribution.

At the beginning of the 5th century the Franks, a group of German tribes, found a place in the history of Europe. We need not dwell on their wars. Sufficient to say that, having invaded the province of Gaul, they settled there and established the kingdom of the Franks which, in time, became that of France.

¹ Robertson, "History of Charles V.," vol. i, p. 217.

Of all the Teutonic tribes, the Franks were the most intelligent, and though most warlike were the least brutal. In taking over a Roman province, they readily adapted themselves, in great measure, to Roman customs, and were very willing to practice the civilization of the more cultivated inhabitants of the country where they made new homes.

The result was that from the time of Clovis, the first of the Merovingian race of kings, and who is deemed the founder in the year 486 of the Frankish kingdom, his people taught the Germans the culture attained by their conquest of a civilized people. Hence the introduction of architecture, and any Operative Freemasonry beyond the building of mere dwellings, into Germany is to be credited mainly to the Franks.

We find very few monuments of the work of Roman builders in Germany, and therefore we can trace the progress of architecture, not by any regular descent from the Roman Colleges of Artificers, but only through the indirect operation of Frankish artists.

Indeed, according to Möller,¹ the really reliable history of German architecture begins with Charlemagne, but the only specimens remaining of that period are the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle and the portico of the Convent of Lorsch near the city of Worms.

Rebold ² informs us that architecture flourished greatly under Charlemagne, who introduced into Gaul architects and stonecutters from Lombardy. Rebold does not always base his claims upon well-supported facts, but in this case he has the backing of historians, more precise in their methods.

The efforts of Charlemagne, who was a legislator as well as a warrior, to promote the civilization of the Germanic nations which he governed, led him,³ after his conquest of Lombardy, to draw materials from that better trained kingdom to advance his projects, and to introduce among his Teutonic subjects some taste for architecture, in which the Lombards at that time excelled all the world.



¹ George Möller, "Denkmäler der Deutschen Baukunst," 4to. Darmstadt, 1821, cap. iii, s. 6.

² "Histoire Générale de la Franc-Maçonnerie," p. 104.

² See Sismondi, "Republiques Italiennes," tome i, p. 20.

Möller shows very plainly the evidence of this movement of architecture into Germany from the south — that is, from Italy. He tells us that in the earliest practice of architecture in Germany there were two styles of building materially differing from each other. The first was foreign, evidently imported from the south — from Italy or Lombardy. Then came a more modern one invented by the Germans themselves. This was taken from the first, and adapted the building art to a northern climate. In this style we find the grandest monuments of architecture possessed by Germany.¹

The leading form of the churches built during the 10th and 11th centuries was the same, says Möller, as that of the churches built at the same period in England, France, and Italy.

Here are two propositions, each of great importance for the purpose of tracing the history of early German Freemasonry through the progress of its groundwork, architecture.

First, we have a confirmation of the claim that the earliest architecture and, of course, the basic Freemasonry of Germany came from Lombardy.

True, Möller (whose authority on the history of German architecture is not to be despised) thinks it an error to credit the Lombards with any material influence upon the building art of the west and north of Europe. But almost in the same breath he admits that German architecture came from Italy, and confesses, also, that the Lombards built a great deal, and appear to have quickly attained to a higher degree of civilization than the Goths.²

Accepting these admissions as historically correct, we are prepared to accept the theory of Thomas Hope, that the Lombards, the *Magistri Comacini*, the Traveling Freemasons from Como, in the 10th century, brought their system of architecture to Germany.

Secondly, in the statement that the style of building then practiced in Germany was the same as that used in England, France, and Italy, we have a further confirmation of Hope's theory that the Traveling Freemasons who erected cathedrals and abbeys were a secret organization, noted for an identity of principles in their buildings as found in all countries from the south of Italy to the north of Scotland.



¹ Möller, "Denkmäler," see above.

² "Denkmäler," cap. ii, s. v.

While dwelling on this period we must not neglect the influence of religion, which evidently played a very important part in spreading the science of architecture, a part well worth study.

Christianity entered Germany, and its gradual civilizing power proceeded with a few exceptions from the south and west of the country — that is, from those parts nearest to Italy and Gaul.

There the clergy as ministers and missionaries of the new religion exercised the greatest influence and engaged in directing the construction of churches and convents, and there we must look for the first artistic showing of architecture.

Architecture, whose boldest conceptions are exhibited in the construction of houses for worship, is very closely connected with religion. Thus, after the spread of Christianity, it became a necessary art, and we may trace its growth side by side with that of the new faith. We find so learned a writer as Möller crediting the origin of the building art in Germany to the time of Charles the Great, and to those countries along the Rhine and in the south where Roman culture and religion had been planted.¹

With these remarks to show what was, in early German history, the condition of architecture, of which the principles were almost always practically enforced in the form of Operative Freemasonry, we may proceed to study its growth until we reach the era of the organized Stonecutters' Gild.

Not until the 10th century do we find the Operative Freemasons of Germany assuming anything like an organized condition. In the reign of Otho the Great (crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle in 936), known as the Civilizer, Roman culture became popular. The Germans had no native or original architecture. When the way was opened to them by the increase of intercourse, they copied the monuments of Roman civilization.

In Germany, as in Gaul and Britain, the arts were at first cultivated by churchmen. The monasteries were workshops. Especially may this be said of ecclesiastical architecture or the housing of the Church.

Sulpice Boisserée gives so lucid a view of the motives which led these old Stonecutters to unite in a fraternity and to serve the Church that we translate his conclusions. We can not too often



^{1 &}quot;Denkmäler," cap. iii, s. vi.

call the attention of the student of Speculative Masonry to the remote origin of our great institution.

In those early days, when the work of building began to take its place in Germany, whoever wished, says Boisserée, to assume the profession of an architect commenced by learning to cut stone. When he became a Master in that art, there grew up between him and his former companions a sort of fraternity which was wisely maintained by the customs and statutes of the Order, and especially observed among those who devoted themselves to the building of houses of worship. To them this work of erecting houses of God was a very noble and a very pious occupation. As even the mere labor of constructing, for this purpose, monuments of solidity, elegance, and fitness required men fully equipped by experience and united by sentiments of honor and fidelity, they, by their union, established a fraternity or private community, differing from the common body of craftsmen by being wholly devoted to churchly architecture. This fraternity preserved, in all their purity, the rules and practices of the art they gave as a secret to the keeping of succeeding generations.

The fraternity had an organization similar to that of the Hanseatic league.² The Masters and workmen employed on edifices of minor importance were subordinate to the architects of the principal buildings, and the fraternity was in the course of time divided into districts extending over all Germany. But this large development belongs to a later period, that of the 12th and 13th centuries, when the Stonemasons adopted that distinct organization as a Gild, which was first exhibited, or, at least, of which we have the earliest records, in the labors of the workmen who produced those wonders of architecture, the cathedrals of Cologne and Strasburg.

Church building was therefore under the care of the Church officials. The abbeys, says Findel, were the nurseries of science and civilization, the center of all energy and zeal in art, and the fosterers of architecture.³ Fergusson thinks that in the Middle Ages, in the construction of religious edifices, the designs were



¹ "Histoire et Description de la Cathédrale de Cologne." Munich, 1843.

² A group of cities, "Hanse" meaning federation, in North Germany and the nearby countries formed into a union, from 1150 to 1669, for mutual protection and profit.

^{3 &}quot;History of Freemasonry," Lyon's Translation, p. 51.

made by bishops, who, taking as a model some former building, verbally corrected its mistakes and suggested improvements to the builder.¹ He thus admits the existence of two classes, the clergy and the laity, both engaged in the pursuit of architecture, and of which classes the former led in the infancy of the art.

Fergusson, who is not always right in his conclusions, here at least is correct. It will be found, as we pursue our history, that architecture as a science and building as an art began under churchly control. Michelet, in his *Histoire de la France*, speaking of the wonderful architecture of the Middle Ages and of the science of mystical numbers found in all the churches of that period, which he considers as the secret of the Freemasons of the Middle Ages, credits this knowledge to the Church.

"To whom," says he, "belonged this science of numbers, this divine mathematics? To no mortal men but to the Church of God. Under the shadow of the Church, in chapters and in monasteries, the secret was transmitted, together with instruction in the mysteries of Christianity. The Church alone could accomplish these miracles of architecture."

The following, by a writer described as "everywhere known as a learned ecclesiologist," is further testimony to the above claim:

"There are phenomena connected with the uniformity of the symbols in the churches of the Middle Ages, with the subsequent loss of everything at all worthy to be called symbolism, which are worthy of note, and suggest a question of which the answer would be very interesting if fully discussed. There is a language of not only the more fundamental portions of the structure of a church, but of the minute detail of its ornaments: all is symbolical; and the symbols are — not the same in all cases, but consistent, and in principle, at least, identical. And this through all ages from the twelfth to the sixteenth, and in all the nations which form the western division of Christendom. After the sixteenth century the language is corrupted, even in those countries which form the papal obedience; and beyond the limits of the influence of Rome it has never been, in the same forms, the vernacular language of the church. Now, how are these phenomena to be accounted for? First, by the fact that ecclesiastics were, all

¹ "History of Architecture in all Countries," etc., p. 80.



through the western church, the architects also, and even the masons and carvers and painters of their several ecclesiastical fabrics. This would account for the fact that everywhere the building speaks a purely theological language.

"Secondly, by the fact that one or two centuries before the time at which those churches were erected which mark the first appearance of symbolical meaning, the Freemasons had been incorporated, with certain privileges, by a papal bull; and being one body, wherever they went they carried the same principles of art with them, the same designs, and even the same hands to execute them. This will account for the uniformity of the language of Ecclesiastical Architecture without disturbing the reason which I have given for its existence, for the body of Freemasons was strictly ecclesiastical, the Pope being at their head and the Bishops and higher orders of the clergy being the leading members.

"With the fall of the Freemasons as a Gild of Architects the language of Ecclesiastical Architecture first lost its vigor of expression and then its very being. We have, therefore, to look back through many centuries for the clue to the symbolical language of Ecclesiastical Architecture. It will be found perhaps in the books of art, if such there be, of the Freemasons of old; but if these do not still exist, or if there never were any, then it must be collected piecemeal and empirically from the ritualists of the Middle Ages, and from a comparison of the best examples of church architecture and decoration with the prominent religious feelings of their respective times, just as the structure of a dead language is recovered by a careful comparison of passages which, taken separately, convey little information." 1

But in time, and indeed at an early period after the revival of architecture in the 10th and 11th centuries, the practice and then the control of architecture passed from the churchmen's ownership and began to be shared by the laymen.

Thus there were, in the history of mediæval architecture in Germany (as well as in other countries), three distinct periods. First, when the science of architecture and the art of building were wholly in the hands of the clergy; second, when they

¹ "The Appropriate Character of Church Architecture." 1842. By the Rev. George Ayliffe Poole (born 1809, died 1883).



were shared by the clergy and the laity; and third, when the science and the art passed from the clergy to the laity. It was in the third period that bishops ceased to be "Masters of the Work" (Magister Operis) and the position was assumed by wholly professional lay artists. The second period may be styled, if we borrow an expression from geology, the "transition period" of mediæval architecture.

In Germany this transition is marked by the organization of the Steinmetzen, and the establishment of workshops, the Bauhütten. The Steinmetzen 1 (literally the Stonecutters) of Germany were builders or architects or both, who in the Middle Ages, from the 9th century at least, associated in fraternities and were engaged, sometimes alone and sometimes with a monastery or under a bishop or other prelate of the Church, in the construction, principally, of religious edifices.²

Fallou,³ in *Mysterien der Freimaurer*, cites various customs of the *Steinmetzen* to show a relationship between them and the modern Speculative Freemasons, who sprung up in the 18th century.

The most important of these customs are as follows:

- 1. The German Steinmetzen divided their members into three classes, Meister, Gesellen, and Lehrlinge, answering to the Masters, Fellows, and Apprentices of the English Freemasons. There is no evidence that these were ritualistic degrees. As has been shown of England and Scotland, they mean ranks, promotion into which depended on length of service and skill in labor.
- 2. The existence of esoteric knowledge, peculiar ceremonies, and a secret initiation.
- 3. The adoption of secret means of recognition, by signs, tokens, and words, by which a strange member could be known.
- ¹ Dr. Krause (Drei Altest. Kunst., iv, 362) thinks that the last syllable in *Steinmetz* comes from masa, mets, or mess, signifying a measure, and conveyed the idea that the chief object of a worker in stone was to form his stone according to a just measure of proportion. Hence a *Steinmetz* would signify, literally, a stone-measurer. But we prefer the generally accepted etymology and derive the word from metzen, to cut. The *Steinmetzen* were the Stonecutters.
- ² As with the early history of Freemasonry in Scotland we were dependent upon the researches of Bro. Lyon, so, in treating of mediæval Freemasonry in Germany, we have drawn liberally from Bro. Findel's "Geschichte der Freimaurer," using the able translation of Bro. Lyon. But we have also profited by the works of Krause, Kloss, Steiglitz, and other writers, Masonic and profane.
- ³ Friedrich Albert Fallou, German lawyer, born 1794, initiated at Altenburgh, 1821. His book was published in 1848 at Leipsic.



- 4. Their establishment as a brotherhood where every member was bound to afford relief to his poorer brethren.
- 5. Laws and usages were adopted which resembled in many respects those of the modern Speculative Freemasons. Some were the natural result of their organization as a brotherhood, but such as their customs at banquets, the preference of a Master's son over other persons, and some others, were peculiar, and were adopted by the Freemasons of the 16th century, and exist today.

The increase in the number of churches and other religious edifices naturally enlarged the demand for workmen. The monks being unable to supply the requisite number, the laity were admitted to a part in architectural labors. Still they were long kept dependent on their ecclesiastical superiors.

Hence the lay craftsmen assisted the monks in their labors as builders, forming, for this purpose, associations among themselves and living in huts near the abbey or other building which they were erecting. To this practice Findel credits the rise of the "Bauhütten." ¹

Hütte is defined as meaning a hut, cottage, or tent. Bauhütte, which is literally a building-hut, was the booth made of boards set up near the building under construction, and where the Stein-metzen, or Stonecutters, kept their tools, carried on their work, assembled to discuss business, and probably ate and slept.²

Sir Christopher Wren, in the *Parentalia*, describes a similar housing custom among the English workers in stone of erecting temporary places. These they called *Lodges*, a word meaning about the same in English that *Hütten* does in German.

The Bauhütten were therefore the Lodges of the German Steinmetzen in the Middle Ages. The word had this meaning until the 18th century, then the English Lodge, modified into Loge, was substituted for it by the Speculative Freemasons who received their charters from the Grand Lodge of England.

Findel says that the real founder of the Bauhütten was Wilhelm, Count Palatine of Scheuren and Abbot of Hirschau. For the purpose of enlarging the abbey he brought workmen from many places. He assembled them with the monks as lay brethren.

¹ Findel, "History," p. 52. ² Findel, "History," p. 54.



He instructed them in art, regulated their social life by special laws, and taught that brotherly concord should prevail because it was only by teamwork and by a loving union of their strength that they could expect glorious results.¹

The Bauhütten flourished for a long time, mainly under the favor of the Benedictine Order of monks. At length the transition period already mentioned began to pass away, and the Master Builders who had received their architectural knowledge from the monks became independent. As early as the 13th century there were many Lodges having no connection with the monasteries, but bound together in an association including all the Stonecutters of Germany.

Until the 12th century our knowledge of the Masonic associations, other than the schools of architecture established within the monasteries, is unsupported by documentary evidence. Indeed, the first written Constitution of the German Freemasons to reach the present day is that of Strasburg, dated 1459, which purports to be a revision of the Regulations of the Stonecutters founded at that city in 1275. Of the latter there is no copy extant.

Winzer, who wrote on the German Brotherhoods of the Middle Ages,² has remarked such regulations may have existed long before written Constitutions, the necessity of which could be felt only when the Craftsmen obtained recognition, and when their laws were put in writing to give them, as it were, greater weight.

Though this is but a theory, it has great probability. In the 11th century the Traveling Freemasons from Lombardy entered Germany and practiced the principles of their art.³

Of this fact we find abundant evidence in the construction during that century of numerous cathedrals in Germany. Such were those of Bamberg, finished in 1019; of Worms, in 1020; of Spire, in 1061; of Constance, of Bonn, in 1100; and a great many others.⁴

Until we approach the period when the Lombard architects diffused the principles of their art in Germany, as the work of an association of Freemasons, about the 11th or 12th century, the history of the Craft in Germany is only that of the Operative

- ¹ Findel, "History," p. 54. See Findel's "History," p. 57.
- ⁸ In 1060 the Masonic brethren of Lombardy spread out into Germany, France, Normandy and Brittany. Rebold, "Histoire Gén. de la Franc-Maçonnerie," p. 109.
- ⁴ Hope mentions in particular the cathedrals of Spire and Worms as specimens of the Lombard style of architecture.



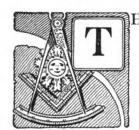
Art in its simplest form, and deriving what little there was of it in common with the Freemasonry of other countries, principally from France.

The Franks from Germany invading Gaul gave France its political character. To the same Franks, returning in the time of Charlemagne and his successors, bringing the civilization they had acquired from the native inhabitants of the conquered Roman province, was Germany indebted for all architectural and Masonic character, until the peaceful invasion of the Lombard Freemasons in the 11th century. From that time the Freemasonry of Germany began to be a Gild of workmen, like those in Britain and Gaul.



CHAPTER SIXTY-TWO

THE CATHEDRAL OF STRASBURG AND ITS STONEMASONS



HE Abbé Philip Andrew Grandidier was a learned historian and canon of the great choir of the Cathedral of Strasburg. He wrote several historical works on Alsatia and Strasburg, where he was born in 1752. Among them were Historical and Typographical Essays on the Cathedral Church of Strasburg. His

attention to the antiquities of his native city, though not a Freemason, his learning, his impartiality, and his abundant opportunities of acquiring information, give no little authority to what he said of German Freemasonry.

He wrote a letter in 1778 to Madame d'Ormoy, which first appeared the following year in the *Journal de Nancy* and, copied ten years afterward in the Marquis de Luchet's *Essai sur la Secte des Illuminés*, has been repeated in French, German, and English, in Masonic books and magazines.

This letter, developed and made the frame of a narrative, he embodied in his *Historical Essays*, published four years later. Here he presents a theory on the origin of Freemasonry which, notwithstanding Dr. Krause's criticism,² has been accepted by several Masonic historians.

The statement of the Abbé Grandidier is very interesting. It is here presented as a foretaste of what we shall say later in this chapter, with some reserve on the same subject.

The Abbé says: "Opposite to the church and the episcopal palace is a building appendant to the Cathedral and the Chapel of St. Catherine which serves as the *Maurerhof*, or workshop, of the Masons and Stonecutters of the Cathedral. This workshop

^{1 &}quot;Essais Historiques et Typographiques sur l'Eglise Cathédrale de Strasburg," Strasburg, 1782.

² "Kunsturkunden der Freimaurersbrüderschaft," iv, p. 251.

is the origin of an ancient fraternity of Freemasons of Germany." 1

The Cathedral Church of Strasburg, and especially its tower, begun in 1277 by the architect Erwin of Steinbach, is a master-piece of Gothic architecture. The building is perfect and worthy of all admiration, since there is not its equal in the world. The foundation was built with such solidity that, notwithstanding the apparent fragility of its open-work, it has to the present day resisted storms and earthquakes.² The tower of the Cathedral was finished in 1439. This noble work spread far and wide the reputation of the Stonemasons of Strasburg.

The Duke of Milan, in 1479, wrote to the magistrates of Strasburg, asking for a person capable of directing the construction of a superb church in his own capital. Vienna, Cologne, Zurich, Freiburg, and Landshut constructed towers in imitation of that of Strasburg, but they did not equal it in height, in beauty or in delicacy.

The Freemasons of those structures spread over Germany, and their name soon became famous. He quotes Jacobus Wimphelingius, who lived near the end of the 15th century, as saying that the Germans are most excellent architects and that Æneas Silvius, declared that in architecture they excelled all other nations.

To distinguish themselves from the common craft, they formed associations named *Hütten*, signifying lodges. These agreed to recognize the superiority of that of Strasburg, which was called *Haupthütte*, or the Grand Lodge.

Later on the project was conceived of forming, out of these associations, a single society for the whole of Germany; but it was not developed until thirteen years after the building of the tower of Strasburg.

- ¹ "Essais Historiques et Typographiques," p. 413. ² Letter to Madame d'Ormoy.
- ³ From the Letter. Grandidier says, "I possess a copy of this letter in Italian." Writers of the 18th century, when referring to facts connected with Masonic history, have often made their claims suspicious by careless or improbable statements. In 1479, the Duke of Milan was a boy of fifteen, the son of the tyrant Galeaz, who had been assassinated in 1476. The Duchy was administered by the Bonne of Savoy, the widow of Galeaz, as Regent, during the minority of her son. Milan, torn at that time by revolution, was in no condition to indulge in the luxury of architecture.
- ⁴ Enea Silvio de Piccolomini, Pope Pius II., born 1405, died 1464. Led a dissolute life but mended his ways about 1445 and in 1458 was elected to the Papacy. See Ranke's "History of the Roman Popes," pages 37-38.



The Masters of lodges met at Ratisbon on April 25, 1459, and drew up their first Statutes. This Assembly made Jos Dotzinger and each of his successors, by virtue of the office of architect of the Cathedral of Strasburg, Grand Masters in Germany of the General Fraternity.

The second and third General Assemblies of lodges were held at Spire on April 9, 1464, and April 23, 1469. The Constitutions were confirmed, and it was enacted that a Provincial Chapter should annually be held in each district. John Hammerer, who lived in 1486, and James of Landshut, who died in 1495, succeeded Jos Dotzinger as Architect of the Cathedral of Strasburg and Grand Master of the Freemasons of Germany. Conrad Wagt, who succeeded them, obtained from the Emperor Maximilian I. the confirmation of their institution and of the statutes of the lodges. The diploma of this Prince is dated at Strasburg, October 3, 1498. Charles V. and Ferdinand I. and their successors renewed these privileges.

This Fraternity of Masters, Companions, and Apprentices (in German, *Meister*, *Gesellen*, and *Diener*), formed a jurisdiction independent of other societies of Freemasons.

The Society of Strasburg embraced all Germany. It held its tribunal in the lodge, or *Maurerhof*, and judged without appeal all causes brought before it, according to the rules of the Fraternity.

The inhabitants of Strasburg submitted to it all disputes about building. In 1461 the Magistracy entrusted to it the entire care of such cases, and in the same year laid down the forms and laws which it should observe, and this privilege was renewed in 1490. The judgments it gave were called *Hüttenbrief* or lodge-letters. The city archives are full of such documents, and there are few old families in Strasburg which have not preserved some of them. But its jurisdiction has been much diminished, especially since 1620, when the Magistracy took from the Lodge of Strasburg the inspection of buildings. This suppression resulted from the abuse of its authority by the Lodge.



The Constitutions of the Freemasons of Germany, at first limited to thirteen, were afterwards extended to seventy-eight regulations. These were renewed and amended by the General Assembly of the Grand Lodge, August 24, 1563, at Basle, and on the 29th of the following September, at Strasburg, seventy-two Masters and thirty Companions were present at this Assembly, presided over by Mark Schau, the architect of the Cathedral. Twenty-two lodges directly depended on the Grand Lodge of Strasburg. The lodges of the Freemasons of Swabia, Hesse, Bavaria, Franconia, Westphalia, Saxe, Misnia, Thuringia, and of the countries along the river Moselle, as far as the frontiers of Italy, acknowledged the authority of the one Grand Lodge.

Early in the 18th century the Master Masons of Strasburg Cathedral imposed a fine on the lodges of Dresden and Nuremberg, and the fine was paid. But by an edict of the Imperial Diet of Ratisbon the correspondence of the Grand Lodge of Strasburg with the lodges of Germany was forbidden.¹

The Grand Lodge of St. Stephen of Vienna, which founded the lodges of Austria, of Hungary, of Styria, and of all the countries near the Danube, the Grand Lodge of Cologne, controlling the places on the west bank of the Rhine, that of Zurich, governing the lodges of Berne, of Lucerne, of Schaffhausen, of St. Gall, and of the cantons of Switzerland, all these submitted important matters to the Mother Lodge of Strasburg.

Members of this Society held no communication with Masons who knew only the use of mortar and trowel. The erection of buildings and the cutting of stone constituted their principal labor. They regarded their art as far superior to that of other Masons. The square, the level, and the compasses became their symbols.

Resolved to form a body distinct from all other workmen, they invented private words and grips for mutual recognition. These they called the *Wortzeichen* or "word sign," the *Gruss* or "salute" and the *Handschenk* or "grip." Apprentices, Companions, and Masters were received with certain secret ceremonies.



¹ Because Alsace, of which Strasburg was the capital, had ceased to be a part of the German Empire and was annexed to France. This was the first precedent for the doctrine now held by American authorities, that Masonic territory is bounded by state lines.

² The Abbé Grandidier says in his letter to Madame d'Ormoy that their motto was "Liberty,' which they sometimes abused by ignoring the lawful authority of the Magistrates.

The Apprentice when he was advanced to the degree took an oath never to reveal by mouth or writing the secret words. The Masters as well as the Companions were forbidden to divulge to strangers the Statutes. It was the duty of every Master of a lodge carefully to preserve the book of the society, so that no one should copy any of the rules. He had the right to judge and punish the Masters, Companions, and Apprentices of his lodge.

The Apprentice desiring to become a Companion had to be proposed by a Master who bore witness of his life and manners. A Companion was subject to the Master for the time fixed by the Statutes, which was from five to seven years. Then he might be admitted as a Master.

Those who did not fulfill their religious duties, who gave free rein to immoral desires, or were lax Christians, or known to be unfaithful husbands, were not received into the society, or were expelled from it, and all Masters and Companions were forbidden any fellowship with them.

No Companion could leave the lodge or speak there without permission of the Master.

Every lodge had a chest where the money given by Masters and Companions at their reception was deposited. This money was used for the relief of poor or sick brethren.

The Abbé Grandidier thinks that in these traits we may recognize the Freemasons of modern times. In fact, he says that the resemblance or analogy is plain, and the allegory exact. There is the same name of lodges for their places of meeting; the same order in their distribution; the same division into Masters, Companions, and Apprentices; both are presided over by a Grand Master; both have particular signs, secret laws, and statutes against profanes—in truth they may say to each other, "My brethren and my companions know me for a Freemason."

For so much are we indebted to the Abbé Grandidier. The Abbé has been supposed to be the first writer treating of the Strasburg Freemasons as a fraternity. Such is not the fact. Nearly thirty years before the publication in the *Journal de Nancy* of his letter to Madame d'Ormoy, attention had been called to this subject by John Daniel Schoepflin, whose work, *Alsatia Illustrated*, first appeared at Colmar in 1751. Schoepflin, who died in 1771, had been for fifty years professor of history



in the Protestant University of Strasburg. He gives an account of the Freemasons of Strasburg, to which Grandidier must have been indebted for much that was written by the latter.

The following fragment is translated from the Alsatia Illustrated of Schoepflin, that the reader may compare the two accounts:

"Some notice must be taken of the singular institution of the Freemasons of Strasburg, who formerly held not the lowest place in the city, and at this day of all the Freemasons of Germany occupy the highest. The construction of the magnificent cathedral, and especially of its tower, spread afar the fame of the Freemasons of the city and excited emulation among other German Craftsmen. Vienna and Cologne erected towers after the model of that of Strasburg, and the associations of workmen and the workshops of those cities were preëminent. To these Zurich was added, with which Cologne was soon joined. On these principal workshops called *Tabernacles* 1 (Lodges) depended from olden time all the rest of the cities of Germany.

"In former times there was a long deliberation at Strasburg, Spire, and other cities on the forming of a common society of all the Stonemasons. Finally at Ratisbon, on St. Mark's day (April 25), 1459, was instituted that great society under the name of a Fraternity, of which the Master of the Work at the Cathedral of Strasburg was to be always installed the presiding officer.

"This institution having been for a long time neglected the Emperor Maximilian I. confirmed it at Strasburg by a solemn charter in 1498. This charter was renewed by Charles V., Ferdinand I. and by others.

"In the Lodge Tribunal the Masters and their Companions sat and judged causes and pronounced sentences according to the Statutes without appeal. The authority of this tribunal was acknowledged by the Freemasons of Saxony, Thuringia, Westphalia, Hesse, Franconia, Bavaria, Swabia and all the region of the Moselle. The Lodge at Vienna, from which those of Styria and Hungary are derived, and of Zurich, under which are those

¹ The Latin word "Tabernaculum" denotes, according to Festus, a tent made like a booth or hut of planks with a boarded roof and covered with skins or canvas. Masonic writers of the Middle Ages have accepted it to mean the "Hutte," which afterwards became the "Loge" in German and the "Lodge" in English. The word is thus used in the Charter of Cologne, which may be taken or not, as the reader pleases, for an evidence of the genuineness of that much disputed document.



of Switzerland, in all grave disputes resort to the Lodge at Strasburg as to a Mother.

"All members of the Fraternity have a secret watchword. We know that the society of Stonemasons throughout Europe has this form and origin. There is the same division of the Order into Lodges, Masters of Lodges, Companions and Apprentices; there are the same laws and secret words. A Grand Master presides over all.

"The Stonecutters 1 have a dislike to the common tribe of Freemasons enrolled with them, because they think and not unjustly that their art of stonecutting is far above the Craft of the Operative Workmen.

"The citizens of Strasburg often submitted questions concerning building to the judgment of the Lodge. Therefore the Magistracy in 1461, committed to it the power of deciding on building matters, and prepared certain laws for this purpose. To these officers was added a Scribe skilled in the law. As in the course of time this privilege became abused, it was withdrawn in 1620 and given to a smaller court." ²

The reader may now compare the two accounts, that of Grandidier with that of Schoepflin. The former is in the letter of 1778, and in the Essays of 1782. The latter was published in 1751. Grandidier has taken almost his very language from Schoepflin, if they did not both borrow from Father Laguille.³

Grandidier and Schoepflin were men of learning — both were natives and residents of Strasburg — and both gave devoted study to the antiquities of that city and of the province of Alsace-Lorraine. We may, therefore, accept what they have said of the Freemasons of Strasburg and their connection with the Cathedral as authentic facts. They are supported by other documents to which both writers refer.

Grandidier, however, fell into one error which Schoepflin escaped, and which is probably due to the fact of his being a pro-



¹ Schoepfiin here makes a distinction worthy of notice, between the "lapicida," or stonecutter and the "cæmentarius," or worker in rough stones, a mere builder of walls. The mediæval Germans noted this difference, when they called the higher class of Freemasons, "Steinmetzen" or Stonecutters and the lower class, who were not free of the Gild, "Maurer," or wall-builders. The reader will remember the like term "rough-masons," used in the old Constitutions of England.

² "Alsatia Illustrated," tome i, p. 338.

² The Jesuit Laguille published in 1725 at Strasburg, a "Histoire d'Alsace, ancienne et moderne," in two volumes.

fane and not therefore aware of the difference in detail between Operative and Speculative Freemasonry. He says that the customs of the two bodies of builders, with whose existence at Strasburg he was acquainted, show some analogy or likeness between the Stonemasons of Strasburg whose association he supposes to have been founded in 1459 and the more modern Order that came over from England near the middle of the 18th century. But he is blind to the historical connection that can easily be traced between them. While he gives a greater antiquity to the old association of Strasburg Operative Freemasons than to the recent one of Speculative Freemasons, he does not realize that the latter was merely an offshoot of the mediæval system of the Traveling Freemasons from whom both descended. He who would write a true history of the rise and progress of the German Steinmetzen must carefully avoid this error.

Evidently there have been three distinct periods in the history of Freemasonry in Germany.

The first period, beginning with the introduction of architecture into Germany, from Gaul and from Italy, extends to the 12th century. Of this period we have no documentary evidence of the organization of a fraternity. But we know from their works that during that time there were architects and builders of great skill, and we have every right to suppose that the feudal system had the same effect upon the Freemasons as it had upon other Crafts, in giving rise to the formation of protective Gilds.

The effect of the feudal system in the Middle Ages was to concentrate power in the hands of the nobles, and to deprive the people of their just rights. The natural result of all oppression is to awaken the downtrodden to a sense of the wrong endured and to plan for relief even before the oppressor seems aware of his injustice.

Therefore the people came together by the bond of a common oppression to secure by their combination the undoubted rights which should never have been denied them. Thus it was that "The butchers, the bakers, the brewers of the town met secretly together and swore to one another, on the gospels, to defend their meat, their bread, and their beer."

Doubtless the Freemasons followed the example of the butchers, the brewers, and the bakers, although as Findel justly remarks,



we have no constitutions to prove the existence of such associations. Those who were free born, of good manners, and skilled in their craft, it is reasonable to suppose, entered into associations whose members were governed by a common obligation and formed a common brotherhood. The history of this period in German Freemasonry has been discussed in the preceding chapter.

The second period begins with the organization of the corporations of Freemasons at the building of the Cathedrals of Cologne and Strasburg. Some writers think this took place even earlier.

The third period commences with the introduction of Speculative Freemasonry into Germany in the 18th century by the favor of the Grand Lodge of England at London. The second period only has our attention in the present chapter.

It has been very generally believed that this second period—the period marked by a well-defined organization of the Craft—dates its origin from the time when that style of architecture known as the Gothic began to flourish.

With this style the high-pitched gable or roof elevation and the pointed arch took the place of the low, flat gable and the semicircular arch which had hitherto prevailed.

Of this architecture much has been written by the ablest professional pens, and much as to its history and its character has been left undetermined. When was it first known, and when did it cease to thrive? Who was its inventor? These are questions no qualified school of architects has yet been able to answer with complete satisfaction either to the speaker or hearer.

One thing, however, we do know with full confidence. And this is that it was the style universally practiced by the Free-masons of the Middle Ages throughout Europe, having been introduced about the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century.

We have also the tradition, perhaps it is not altogether mere tradition, that these Freemasons, traveling from country to country, and planting everywhere the almost divine principles of their symbolic art, were really the inventors of Gothic Architecture.

But be that as it may, the memorials of these arts, in the massive buildings they erected, have so cemented the history of Gothic Architecture with that of Freemasonry in the Middle



Ages, that it is impossible, in any treatise on the latter subject, to overlook the former.

"The spirit of the Middle Ages," says C. W. F. von Schlegel, in his History of Ancient and Modern Literature, "especially as it developed in Germany, is in nothing so impressively manifested as in that style of architecture called the Gothic. . . . The real inventors of this style are unknown to us; yet we may be assured that it did not start from one master-mind, or else his name would certainly have been transmitted to us. The Master Artificers who produced those astonishing works appear rather to have formed a particular society or corporation, which sent out its members through divers countries. Let them, however, have been who they may, they did more than merely rear stone on stone, for in doing so they arrived at expressing bold and mighty thoughts."

Paley expresses a like opinion when he says that mediæval architecture, by which he means the Gothic, "was not a mere result of piling together stone and timber by mechanical cunning and ingenious device. It was the visible embodying of the highest feelings of adoration and worship and holy abstraction; the expression of a sense which must have a language of its own, and which could have utterance in no worthier or more significant way." ¹

This symbolic style, in which the Stonecutter became not only the builder of churches, but the preacher to their congregations, and in which there were literally "sermons in stones," was gradually developed by the skill of the Freemasons, and flourished from about the middle of the 12th to the middle of the 16th century.

These are Paley's dates, but Möller ² gives the style a greater extent and an earlier origin, though he confines the true Gothic within the limits of four centuries as does Paley.

Möller says that the various styles of building which appeared in Europe after the decay of Roman Architecture, and continued till the 16th century, when they were set aside by the modern Græco-Roman art, were all for a long time classified under the general name of Gothic. This term was afterward applied to the pointed arch style favored in the 13th century.



[&]quot;Manual of Gothic Architecture," chap. i, p. 5.

² "Denkmäler der Deutschen Baukunst," cap. i, p. 9.

The invention of this style, so expressive in all its uses of a profound thought, has been credited to the mediæval fraternity of Freemasons. If this hypothesis be correct, of which there can scarcely be a doubt, then that invention was probably made, or at least perfected, after the Freemasons had released themselves from church control, and, withdrawing from the monks and the monasteries, had become an independent Order.

"If we consider," says Boisserée, "the impetus given in the 13th century by the wealth and the liberty of the cities to commerce, to industry, and to the arts, we will readily comprehend that it is in the class of citizens, and not in that of the clergy, that we are to look for the inventors of that admirable architecture which was consecrated to divine worship. Notwithstanding all the great and useful things that the clergy have done for literature and science, they have been deficient in that liberty which comes from an active life in the world, and which is a necessary element in the elevation of the arts, as well as of poetry." ¹

"In this mediæval life religion was a dominant, probably the dominant factor; and because it laid such hold upon the daily lives of the people, and was so incorporated with their every thought and act, it was possible to build those great cathedrals that make beautiful every district of England.

"Once grasp this point of view of the mediæval mind, and it becomes at once apparent how it was possible to erect those giant churches, the building of which was not at all a matter of priestly coercion, but a spontaneous act of the multitude, actually loving in a personal way that God to whom they believed they were indebted for such pleasures as they had, and whom, frankly, they wished to incline to further favors by propitiatory gifts.

"Moreover, every man possesses, latent or otherwise, the sense of beauty and a desire for its expression. To the peasant of the Middle Ages, religion was the only means through which this expression could be made. It was all of the beauty that came into his life. The service was beautiful, the vestments and utensils of worship were beautiful, and the house where worship had its home was to be made beautiful by his help, and

¹ "Histoire et Description de la Cathédrale de Cologne," by Sulpice Boisserée, Munich, 1843, p. 14.



it thereupon became in a measure his, for he had contributed to its beauty. Not unnaturally has a great English prelate called this 'the golden age of English churchmanship,' because clearly it was the age of faith with works." ²

Let the reader carefully consider the two avenues of study bearing upon the invention of the Gothic type of building. Did the inspiration as from some deep well of truth spring up and flow free and sparkling to crystallize in these enduring monuments of religious expression in gloriously carved stone? Or was it the impress and action from the higher placed ones of the Church's own official family filtering down to the multitude with instructions that the latter followed blindly because they lacked skill to do more than obey? We prefer the former of these viewpoints. Rather would we conclude that all those Freemasons engaged in the work found a holy joy, an onward spirit-stirring urge only satisfied by fullest self-expression, the recording in stone of the innermost promptings of the soul, the heart's desire made manifest, the faith artistically visible, weighty, and blessed. Such Craftsmen needed not the spur, the rein was ample. Theirs was not a worship of idle promise but the praise and prayer of performance.

Thus the new style, the invention of the Freemasons after their freedom from the control of the Church, prevailed at the same time in all the countries of Europe. In Germany the two most celebrated instances were the Cathedrals of Cologne and Strasburg. Each of these cities has been claimed by various authors as the birthplace of German Freemasonry in its Gild or corporate form.

What has been said by Schoepflin and Grandidier in reference to the claims of Strasburg to be the center whence Freemasonry sprung in the 13th century has been heretofore shown.

For Cologne the claims are equally strong, although not so conclusively expressed, nor has it furnished any documents, as Strasburg did, of its claims to be the Masonic center of Germany. The document known as the "Charter of Cologne," if it had really come from the Lodge of that city, would undoubtedly have been of great value as testimony in favor of the theory that makes Cologne the seat of German Freemasonry. Unfortunately, there

² "As It Is In England," by Albert B. Osborne. New York, 1913, pp. 138-140.



Boisserée, whose book on the Cologne Cathedral exhibits much research, seeks to adjust the difficulty arising from the rivalry of Cologne and Strasburg. He says that as the City of Cologne gave the first example of a fraternity of Freemasons, the Architect of the Cathedral was considered the Chief of all the Masters and Workmen of Lower Germany, just as the Architect of the Cathedral of Strasburg, which was commenced nineteen years after that of Cologne, was made the Chief of all the Masters and Workmen employed in work of the same kind in the countries between the Danube and the Moselle. Thus, he says, the Lodge of Stonecutters employed at the Cathedral of Cologne was the seat of the Grand Master of Lower Germany, and that of the Cathedral of Strasburg was the seat of the Grand Master of Upper Germany. Afterward there was established, he claims, a central Mastership for all Germany, and Strasburg, where the works were continued for a long time, disputed this preëminent position with Cologne as Lübeck did for the Hanseatic League.

According to Boisserée, there were at first two Grand Lodges, one at Cologne and one at Strasburg, dividing the jurisdiction over Germany; that afterwards there was but a single central head for all Germany, which was claimed by both Cologne and Strasburg.

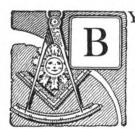
But Boisserée produces no authority to prove this statement, and we therefore must be satisfied with Strasburg as the seat of the first known and recognized head of mediæval Freemasonry in Germany.

Cologne can not be passed over in silence. Whatever may have been the authority that its Lodge exercised as a Masonic power, it must at least be acknowledged that in its Cathedral the purely symbolic principles of Gothic architecture, the peculiar style of the mediæval Freemasons, developed with a more profound significance than in any other building of the time. Therefore we will devote a chapter to this truly remarkable Cathedral.



CHAPTER SIXTY-THREE

THE CATHEDRAL OF COLOGNE AND THE STONEMASONS OF GERMANY



Y the general consent of architectural writers, the Cathedral of Cologne has been admitted to be one of the most beautiful religious edifices in the world. Considered to be a perfect type of the old Germanic or Gothic style of architecture, it has been deemed a central point around which have gathered the most

important historical and artistic researches on the subject of the architecture of the Middle Ages.

The cornerstone of Cologne Cathedral was laid in 1248, the sanctuary was dedicated in 1322, the nave was ready for use in 1388, and the southern tower had reached a height of about 180 feet in 1447.

At this stage of the building the work was stopped and was not resumed for four hundred years.

During the 19th century labor was again renewed upon the building. This resumption was mainly due to the efforts of Sulpice Boisserée who prevailed upon the Crown Prince, who afterwards became Frederick William IV., to use his influence towards the completion of the building. There was great popular enthusiasm aroused. Generous gifts were made to the building fund. The Cathedral was finished in 1880 and the opening ceremonies took place in the presence of William I. and all the reigning princes of Germany.

The entire building covers an area of 7,370 square yards; the nave of five aisles is 445 feet long, and the transept with three aisles is 282 feet wide; the height of the nave is about 202 feet, and that of the two towers 515 feet.

So high did it stand in the esteem of the experts of that day, and so much were its builders valued for the skill they had displayed in its construction, that, as Boisserée tells us,¹ the Master

¹ "Histoire et Description de la Cathédrale de Cologne."

Masons of Cologne were often invited to superintend the building of many other churches.

Thus the continuation of the steeple of the Cathedral of Strasburg was entrusted to John Hültz, of Cologne. Another John of Cologne, in 1369, built the two churches of Campen, on the shores of the Zuyder Zee; and he adopted for his design that of the Cologne Cathedral. The Cathedrals of Prague and of Metz were built on the same plan. In 1442 the Bishop of Burgos imported into Spain two stonecutters from Cologne to complete the towers of his cathedral.

To this leading position of the cathedral and of its builders in the history of mediæval architecture must we assign the equally prominent position which has been assumed for it in the traditions of modern Freemasonry. The making of that very popular, but altogether doubtful document, known as the "Charter of Cologne," is probably due to the fact that at the date assigned to it the Freemasons of Cologne were considered as the chiefs of the Craft, and there was very good reason and fitness in giving to them the duty of convening a Grand Lodge, whose representatives were brought from every part of Europe.

The present Cathedral is the successor of two others. The first is said to have been founded by St. Maternus, who was Bishop of Cologne in the 4th century. That pioneer building, if the account of it is not altogether tradition, and perhaps myth, must have been constructed in the Roman method and by Roman artisans, for the city did not come under the control of the Franks until the 5th century.

The second Cathedral, the history of which is also very imperfect, is said to have been consecrated in the year 873. Of its having been burned down in 1248 there is no doubt. This edifice does not seem to have met the growing needs or the increasing pride and wealth of the church, for before its destruction by fire, Archbishop Conrad is said to have had plans prepared for the construction of a new one, which should surpass all existing churches in magnificence. Archbishop Engelbert had designed to do the same thing twenty-five years before, but was prevented from carrying out this intention by his assassination in 1225.

The second Cathedral was destroyed by fire in 1248, and the new one was begun the same year. Larousse and some other



writers state that the work was commenced in 1249. But Boisserée, upon whose authority one may safely rely, says that the foundation-stone of the new edifice was laid on the eve of the feast of the Assumption, August 14, 1248, by Archbishop Conrad, in the presence of the Emperor, Frederick II., and a gathering of nobility and church officials of every grade.

The solemn ceremonies which accompanied this event have been described at length by the historian of the Cathedral, Sulpice Boisserée.

The foundation-stone was deposited in the spot which was destined for the high altar, and where was temporarily erected a wooden cross.

After the offering of prayers and psalms the Archbishop proceeded, with the assistance of the architect and by means of a chisel and mallet, to engrave the figure of a cross on the four angles of the stone. In the interior of the stone, in a cavity specially made for the purpose, was deposited an account of the ceremony, some images of saints made in consecrated wax, certain coins and other objects which bore relation more or less to the period of time when the stone was laid.

Then the Archbishop blessed the stone, sprinkled it with holy water, and delivered it to the workmen, who lowered it into the pit prepared for it.

The Archbishop then descended, accompanied by several attendants, and after spreading some mortar with a trowel over the face of the stone, gave it a blow with a hammer and placed a second stone upon the first. The Emperor, the Pope's Legate, and several princes and nobles followed the example of the Archbishop and the trowel and hammer passed from hand to hand until it came to the architect, while the choir chanted the 87th Psalm, beginning "His foundation is in the holy mountains." 1

The work was continued until 1509. During that period, the labors were halted often because of the bloody strife which took place in the 13th and 14th centuries between the city

¹ "Histoire et Description de la Cathédrale de Cologne," p. 7. We insert this description to show how the spirit of symbolism was preserved in all things connected with the architecture of those mediseval Freemasons, a heritage which they have bequeathed to their successors, the Speculative Freemasons. If we compare this account with the modern ritual for the laying of foundation-stones, it will be seen that some of the leading points have a very close resemblance to this Cologne ceremony.



and the archbishops. Hence at the beginning of the 16th century, only the choir and the surrounding chapels had been finished. In later wars the building suffered much, and would at length have been pulled down had it not been for the active exertions of a Fleming, Gerhard de Saint Trond, who caused subscriptions to be generously offered and the work was resumed.

The historical question as to who was the architect that drew the plans and first presided over their execution has never been satisfactorily settled. While the fame of Erwin von Steinbach has been preserved as the architect of the rival Cathedral of Strasburg, the name of the surpassing artist who was the architect of that of Cologne has been, apparently, lost beyond hope of recovery.

There is a legend in connection with this problem which, if of no particular value historically, is of some interest as a romance.

The Archbishop had called upon the architects of Germany to submit plans for the construction of the Cathedral. Many were presented but none were satisfactory to the prelate, who rejected them all.

Among the unfortunate applicants was a young architect who was so hopeless at his want of success, that one day he repaired to the banks of the River Rhine and there thought of committing suicide. But before casting himself into the river, he tried, but in vain, to draw a new plan for the Cathedral.

Suddenly the devil appeared before him as a respectable old gentleman dressed in black, and offered him a plan which he promised him should be accepted by the Church officials. But the fiend would not give it to the architect except in exchange for his soul.

The youth, daring neither to accept nor to refuse the offer, asked for a day's time to think it over. To this Satan agreed, and they arranged to meet again at the same place on the afternoon of the next day.

In the interval the young architect consulted the Archbishop and the canons of the Chapter, and by their advice he returned to the meeting-place at the appointed time.

The devil again showed the plan and renewed his offer of an exchange — the parchment with the plan drawn upon it, for the soul of an architect. The fearless youth snatched the plan out



of the devil's hand and thrust the parchment into his bosom beneath a relic of St. Ursula.

The devil, enraged, exclaimed: "This is a trick of the rascally priests! But mark me, the Cathedral, the plan of which you have stolen from me, shall never be finished, and your own name shall forever remain unknown."

During the struggle to get possession of the drawing, the devil's claws had torn off a corner of the parchment, and thus the plan to that extent was imperfect. The young artist did his very best to invent something which should properly take the place of the missing part, and always, after many trials, failing to succeed, he at length died of chagrin. His name has been forgotten, and the Cathedral, for six hundred years, remained unfinished.

The story of the unknown architect of Cologne and his unhappy fate, told in various ways, has always been a favorite myth with the German poets. Thus Frederick Rückert:

"Der Meister, der's entwarf Baut es nicht aus, und starb; Niemand mocht' sich getraun, Seitdem ihn aufzubau'n, Den hohen Dom zu Köln."

The Master who produced the plan did not finish it but died; no one since has dared to build it up, the lofty Cathedral of Cologne.

There are but two names that have been proffered as claimants for the honor of being the architect of the Cathedral of Cologne — at least there are only two names whose apparent merits are such as to have secured any sort of consideration. These are the celebrated philosopher, Albertus Magnus, or Albert the Great, and a distinguished Freemason known as Master Gerard.

Let us first dispose of the claims of the philosopher.

Albertus Magnus was born of an illustrious family at Laevingen, Swabia, Southwestern Germany, in 1193. At the age of sixteen he entered the Dominican Order, of which afterward he became the Provincial or superior officer of a district. Pope Alexander VI. appointed him Bishop of Ratisbon; but Albertus, having held the office for only three years, laid aside the miter



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Albertus's knowledge of the principles of natural science was far in advance of the times in which he lived. Many of his experiments were of so extraordinary a nature that he obtained, in that age of childish belief and ignorance, the reputation of being a magician. Wonderful stories have come down to our own time of his power in the occult art.

Thus, for example, it was said that he had occupied thirty years in making an entire man of brass, which would answer all sorts of questions and would even perform domestic services.

Another legend relates that on a certain occasion he invited William, Earl of Holland and King of the Romans, who was passing through Cologne, to a banquet in the open air. It was in the depth of winter, and the whole face of the earth was covered with snow. The king, however, was no sooner seated at table, than the snow disappeared, the temperature of the air rose to that of summer and the sun burst forth with dazzling splendor. The ground became covered with rich grass, the trees were suddenly clothed with foliage, with flowers and with fruits; vines presented clusters of luscious grapes to the company. The table was loaded with dishes of exquisite food which was served by a group of gracefully dressed pages, who came no one knew whence. But as soon as the feast was over, everything disappeared; all became wintry as before; the snow lay upon the ground, and the guests, chilled by the sudden change, gathered up the cloaks and mantles which they had previously thrown aside, and hurried to the fires in the apartments.

Such an extravagant and fanciful legend shows what was the reputation of Albertus among the people of his time, did not hesitate to ascribe to him the possession of an almost limitless amount of learning.

It is not surprising, therefore, that to him, in the uncertainty of who was the real architect, should have been ascribed the honor of preparing the plans of the Cathedral of Cologne, especially since the erection of that great masterpiece of the building art was commenced during his residence in the city.



Some writers have credited also to him the invention of the Gothic style of architecture, of which the Cathedral of Cologne was one of the earliest and most magnificent specimens.

Those who have believed that he invented the plans for the construction of the Cologne Cathedral, have founded their belief on the profound symbolism of the plan, and on the supposition that Albertus was, according to the views of Heidelof, the one who restored the symbolic language of the ancients and applied it to the principles and practice of architecture.

This seems to be but the exchanging of one theory for another. It would be as difficult to prove that Albertus was the discoverer of the principles of symbolic architecture, which certainly does constitute, or at least among the mediæval Freemasons did constitute, the distinguishing element of their style, as it would be to prove that he was the inventor of the plans for the construction of the Cathedral.

If one of these theories was satisfactorily proved, it would give much likelihood to the other, but, unfortunately, the required proof is wanting.

Boisserée, who has carefully discussed the question, refuses to adopt the opinion which credits the plan of the Cathedral to Albertus.² He does not believe that officials of the Church alone were the possessors of symbolic ideas, but he is sure that only an architect could give substantial expression to those ideas. He therefore supposes that the plans of the Cathedral must have been devised by an architect.

But Boisserée points out that Albertus Magnus, though justly greatly respected for his extensive knowledge, never practiced the art of architecture, and could not therefore have made the plans or superintended their execution.

The other person to whom has been ascribed the honor of being the architect of the Cathedral of Cologne is one Maître Gérard, or Master Gerard.

"Historians," says Boisserée, "are silent concerning this Gerard, as they are in regard to all other architects of the Cathedral. I, however, consider him as being the first of them and consequently as the author of the admirable plan which is not less bold



¹ In his "Bauhttte des Mittelalters," quoted by Findel.

² "Histoire et Description de la Cathédrale de Cologue," p. 12.

than it is ingenious. If the plan had been furnished by another architect, we must suppose that he died at the very beginning of the work, and this we have no reason for believing.

"There is still less reason for supposing that the plan was the production of some man of genius, versed in the knowledge of the art but not himself a professional architect. For we may be sure that the plan of an edifice so immense, of a composition so rich and bold, calculated with so much wisdom in its minutest details and with such a due regard to the execution, could have been invented only by an artist who to great experience added the most exact knowledge of all technical methods and the certainty of being able to realize in practice his happy conceptions." ¹

Hence it is that Boisserée declines to credit the position of first architect of the Cathedral to Albertus Magnus, and assigns it to Master Gerard.

The volume of the *procès verbaux*, or reports of cases of the Senate of Cologne, commenced in 1396, contains a list of the founders and benefactors of the Hospital of St. Ursule at Cologne. This compilation mentions the name of Master Gerard and he is there described as the *Werk-Meister vom Dom*, or "Master of the Work of the Cathedral." ²

The Livre Copial of the Chapter of Cologne is preserved, says Boisserée, in the archives of the city of Darmstadt. On page 92 of this book is a copy of a charter in which the Chapter grants to Master Gerard a plot of ground in consideration of the services performed by him. At this site a house built of stone was erected by Gerard at his own expense.

We are told by Boisserée that in this charter Gerard is styled "a Stonecutter, the Director of our Cathedral."

As the date of the charter is 1257, which is only eight years after the commencement of the Cathedral, it is not probable, as Boisserée has maintained, that there had been an earlier architect who had died or been dismissed. Again, as the charter distinctly calls him a lapicida, a "stonecutter," and designates him as the rector fabrica, "the Director, or Ruler of the Cathedral," we are of the opinion that the question may be considered as settled that Gerard was the name of the first architect of



¹ Boisserée, "Histoire et Description de la Cathédrale de Cologne," p. 10.

² See above work by Boisserée, p. 12.

the Cathedral of Cologne and that he was a Freemason by profession.

As to the influence which this building and the artists engaged in its construction had upon the organization of the fraternity of Stonemasons of Germany, historical records are silent, and we are left mainly to infer the truth from related facts.

It is said by Winzer 1 that Albertus Magnus altered the constitution of the Fraternity and gave them a new code of laws. But as at the same time, and almost in the same passage, he credits to the same person the designing of the plans for the Cathedral, we may be inclined to give no more credit to the one assertion than we do to the other.

But the Cathedral is one of the finest and most elaborate of all the works of Gothic architecture, and that style was, it is admitted, the invention of the Freemasons of the Middle Ages. Therefore we arrive at the legitimate conclusion that the workmen were members of that Fraternity which came into Germany about the 10th century from Italy, but of the nature of whose organization, of the customs they practiced, and of the laws which they adopted for their government we have no documentary evidence, until the 15th century, when we find the ordinances of the Stonecutters adopted at Strasburg in the year 1459.

We have documentary evidence of the existence of gilds in Germany before the middle of the 12th century. "At that time," says Fergusson, "all trades and professions were organized in the same manner, and the Gild of Masons differed in no essential particulars from those of the shoemakers or hatters, the tailors or vintners, all had their Masters and Past Masters, their Wardens and other officers, and were recruited from a body of apprentices who were forced to undergo years of probationary servitude before they were admitted to practice their art." ²

There is no doubt that this statement is substantially correct, although there were some important differences between the Gilds of Freemasons and those of other crafts, one peculiarity of which (the nomadic or wandering character of the former) Fergusson mentions later on in his *History of Architecture*.



¹ Author of "German Brotherhoods of the Middle Ages," quoted in Findel's "History of Freemasonry."

² "History of Architecture in all Countries," vol. i, p. 2. B. II, chap. viii, p. 477.

We have a right, therefore, to conclude that at Cologne, during the construction of the Cathedral, the Freemasons who were engaged in that labor were already organized as a corporation and had their regulations, usages, and laws, though they have not been preserved to us in a written form.

But as it has been observed by a writer on this subject,¹ we have no reason to doubt the existence of such associations before the 12th century even if we have no positive documentary evidence of the fact in the transmission of written constitutions. Winzer is of the opinion, and the conclusion seems reasonable, that it was not until they had succeeded in getting formal recognition, and when they were desirous of obtaining some special privilege, that the necessity of a written Constitution was felt, so as to give them, as it were, a superior sanction.

Hence, though the Cathedrals of Cologne and Strasburg and some others of less grandeur were begun in the 12th century, the earliest extant written Constitution is that of Strasburg, whose date is about the middle of the 15th century.

Whether these Statutes of the Strasburg Freemasons were enacted for the first time in 1459, which is wholly improbable, or whether they were only confirmations of other regulations, are questions which will be taken up and thoroughly examined in a later chapter.

This much, however, we think has been determined as historically probable, even if not historically capable of proof by thoroughly indisputable documentary evidence.

The most important labor of the Freemasons of Germany as a corporate gild, in the development of their peculiar style of architectural symbolism, was the Cathedral of Cologne. This fabric must then at that time have been the central point of German mediæval Freemasonry. Nineteen years afterwards the Cathedral of Strasburg was begun. At that time it is probable that the district was divided and both Cologne and Strasburg became the separate centers in Lower and in Upper Germany whence other *Bauhütten*, Gilds or Lodges emanated.

In time, however, probably from the suspension of the labors on the Cologne Cathedral in 1509, that Cathedral was shorn of

¹ Winzer, "German Brotherhoods of the Middle Ages," quoted by Findel, "History of Free-masonry," p. 57.



its importance as a Masonic headquarters, and the power and jurisdiction of the Fraternity was centered in the *Haupt-Hütte* or Grand Lodge of Strasburg, which in 1549 modified the old regulations and preserved them in the form of a written Constitution which has been handed down to the present day.

¹ This decline of Cologne as a Masonic power affords another argument against the value and truth of the Charter said to have been issued in 1535.

CHAPTER SIXTY-FOUR

CUSTOMS OF THE GERMAN STONEMASONS



HATEVER knowledge we can obtain from existing documents of the customs and regulations of the Stonemasons who wrought at the building of Cathedrals and other religous edifices in Germany during the Middle Ages, will be so much gained in the way of enabling us to understand the theory which derives the

present institution of Speculative Freemasons from the Operative Freemasons of that period.

The two most frequently cited authorities among the German writers on the subject of these customs of the Middle Ages are Fallou in his Mysteries of the Freemasons as well as their only true Foundation and Origin, and Winzer in his work entitled The German Brotherhood of the Middle Ages.

These thoughtful books contain much interesting matter, and the general conclusions at which the authors have arrived as to the origin of the Masonic institution are in accordance with the opinions we have already expressed in this work of ours. But like some of our older English writers on the history of Freemasonry, Fallou especially has indulged in some speculations which are by no means calculated to increase our respect for his accuracy as an historian. Both these authors have, however, been freely and favorably cited by Findel, who is himself a conservative writer and but little inclined to take any theory on trust.

The theory advanced by Fallou and Winzer is that the German Stonemasons were fraternities in possession of secrets relating to the craft or mystery which they exercised. These authors have sought to prove that the Freemasons of the present day took the ritual which they practice from the mediæval Stonecutters.

¹ "Die Mysterien der Freimaurer," Leipsic, 1859.

² "Die Deutschen Brüderschaften des Mittelalters," Giessen, 1859.

This important point we do not think they have successfully demonstrated in its full extent. There is, however, undoubted evidence that certain words and signs have been handed down, and these but slightly changed, if indeed they are changed at all, in their transmission, to the Freemasons of this day.

Another point advanced by these authors is that the German Stonecutters borrowed their customs and laws partly from other corporations of about the same period with them, and partly from the regulations of the monastic order. The latter consideration becomes a very likely theory when we remember the close connection which originally existed between the monks and the architects.

The last proposition of Fallou and Winzer is that the English Stonemasons received their mysteries from the German Stonemasons, the *Steinmetzen*, a proposition which is perhaps only partly true, as the English Freemasons undoubtedly were recruited from time to time by the addition of Continental workmen who came from Italy and France as well as from Germany.

Brother Mackey was frank in saying that he always believed that the earliest of the old English Constitutions, that, namely, known as the Halliwell or Regius manuscript, was a translation from a German original, and a very instructive proof of the introduction in the 14th century of German Stonemasonry or Freemasonry into England.

A most invaluable aid to the scholar engaged in researches into the true position of the mediæval Stonemasons, is the work of George Kloss, entitled Freemasonry in its real meaning as shown by ancient and genuine records of the Stonecutters, Masons and Freemasons.¹

In this work we will find details of all the known laws and written Constitutions of the mediæval Stonemasons of Germany and England arranged systematically according to the dates and so compiled as to show the progress of the gradual transition from the Operative to the Speculative institution.

Kloss, as the result of his labors, came to the conclusion that the Freemasonry of the present day is a legacy, in part a survival, in part a growth, from the Stonemasonry of the Middle

¹ "Die Freimaurerei in ihrer wahren Bedeutung aus den alten und ächten Urkunden der Steinmetsen, Masonen und Freimaurer nachgewiesen," Leipsic, 1845.



Ages. He finds that no distinction can be maintained between the old Operative and the recent Speculative system, the ancient laws, usages, and charges being the same in our own day and generation with but slight, if any, modern alteration.

With some reservations, this theory may perhaps be accepted in its second clause, and unreservedly in its first.

But the great value of the work of Kloss consists in the mediæval German Constitutions which it contains and from which and from some other sources we may derive a competent knowledge of the practices of the German Stonemasons of the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries. These rules form the subject of the present chapter.

The two oldest Constitutions extant of the German Stonemasons are those enacted at Strasburg, in 1459, and those adopted at Torgau, in 1462.

The ancient laws of the brotherhood were first given a permanent form in the code adopted at Ratisbon on Easter day, in the year 1459, by the Masters and Fellows there assembled in the manner of a Chapter.¹ This code of regulations was soon after ratified at Strasburg and then issued by authority as the "Ordinances of the Stonecutters of Strasburg." Heldmann published them in the year 1819 in his book entitled The three most ancient historical Memorials of the German Freemasons' Brotherhood.³ They were subsequently published by other writers, but to Heldmann must be given the honor of first giving this important document to the public.

Bro. Heldmann tells the following story of how it came into his possession. All, he says, who have written of the Cathedral of Strasburg speak of the old Statutes of the Grand Lodge there, without imparting them to their readers, or, indeed, being able to do so, since they have always been carefully preserved under a triple custody. While passing through Strasburg in the year 1817, he took extraordinary pains to get possession of a copy



¹ "Kapitelsweise" is an expression borrowed, says Findel, from the Benedictine monks, whose convent meetings were called "Capitula." But the word and the thing were common to all the Monastic Orders. See Forbrooke, "British Monachism," ii, 133.

² Dr. Friedrich Heldmann, born 1776, died 1838, a professor of political science. Initiated at Freiburg in 1809, he founded a Lodge of Freemasons at Aarau called "Zur Brudertreue." A capable writer of Masonic books, he did excellent work in historical research.

³ "Die drei ältesten geschichtlichen Denkmale der Deutschen Freimaurerbrüderschaft," Aarau, 1819.

of these Statutes, but in vain. But he afterward obtained a copy of the Statutes of 1459 from an architect, who had caused it to be made during a temporary residence at Strasburg in the beginning of the revolution, and he also got possession, through another architect, of a copy of the revised code of 1563. Bro. Osterneth, who was a member of the Grand Lodge of Strasburg, and who had in his possession a copy of the Statutes of 1459, compared it with Heldmann's exemplar and admitted the latter to be fully trustworthy.

It appears, therefore, that the Statutes of 1459, as published by Heldmann in 1819, have the mark of genuineness and may be accepted as a faithful exposition of the practice of the Craft at the time of their adoption.

The Constitutions of Torgau form the next authentic document in the history of the German Fraternity of the 15th century. Torgau is a town in the Prussian province of Saxony, and has a historical reputation as being the place where the Lutherans and the Elector Frederick agreed upon a league. The Stonemasons, whose headquarters was there, had accepted the Statutes of Strasburg when first set forth, but three years afterwards thought it necessary to modify them to some extent. They therefore drew up, in 1462, a code of 112 articles. These regulations are known as the "Constitutions of Torgau."

A duplicate copy of these Constitutions was deposited in the Stonemasons' Lodge or *Hütte*, at Rochlitz, in 1486. Christian Ludwig Stieglitz published at Leipsic, in 1829, a copy of these Constitutions in a work written by him *On the Church of St. Kunigund at Rochlitz*, and on the Stonemasons' Lodge at the same place.¹

The two Constitutions, those of Strasburg and Torgau, are the only authentic statutes of the Stonemasons which are known to us. Only from them can we derive any reliable information on the subject of the customs of the Craft at that period.

We learn in the first place from these Constitutions that there were in former times unwritten regulations by which the whole Craft had been governed; that these regulations had been much neglected, in consequence of which disputes and strife had arisen among the workmen. These evils it was the object of the Constitutions to avoid in future by the adoption of satisfactory

1 "Ueber die Kirche der heiligen Kunigunde zu Rochlitz und die Steinmetshütte daselbst."



statutes for the government of those who should unite in the establishment of a fraternity.

In Germany, therefore, as we have seen, in England, in France, and in other countries, the work of building was carried on by two distinct classes of workmen; one class of craftsmen who were not associated in a Gild, corporation, or society; and another class who, by these Constitutions, had formed themselves into a brotherhood.

Under the English Constitutions this distinction between the classes is very clearly and forcibly expressed, and the Freemason who is a member of the Gild is forbidden to hold any communication with the Layer, Rough Mason, or Cowan, all of which names are used to mean a Stonemason who has not been admitted into the Fraternity.

The German Statutes also show this distinction very plainly. "No Craftsman or Master," say the Constitutions of Strasburg, "who does not go to the Holy Sacrament shall be received into the Fraternity." In repeated references the writers of the Constitutions speak of "Masters and Craftsmen who are of the Fraternity," which, of course, involves the contrary proposition, namely, that there were Masters and Craftsmen who were not of the Fraternity.

What were the peculiar ceremonies which accompanied the reception of initiates into the Fraternity, or whether there were any such ceremonies or not, are questions that we fear can never be settled in such a satisfactory way as we should desire all historical problems to be completely solved.

That there were some ceremonies it is natural to suppose; these *Steinmetzen* had architectural secrets at least, and admission into all secret societies is attended by some form of initiation.

Fallou asserts that the ceremony was imitated from the rite of consecration practiced by the Order of Benedictine monks. But we need additional authority to sustain and prove the assertion.

Findel, in his *History of Freemasonry*, gives a very detailed account of the mediæval initiation into German Freemasonry. We shall make use of his account of the ceremonies followed by the brethren on that occasion. This we shall do without admitting that we are satisfied as to the correctness of every detail.



The Fellow Craft, as we style him, or the Gesell of the Germans, before he could be admitted into the Fraternity was required to prove that he was born in wedlock, of respectable parents, and that he himself bore a good reputation, with due mental and physical capacity. He was then presented with his own personal mark, which thenceforward he had to cut into every stone on which he was engaged.

We give the account of the succeeding ceremonies in the words of Findel, as translated by Lyon.

"On the day fixed the candidate went into the house where the assemblies were held, where the Master in the Chair had everything prepared in due order in the Hall of the Craft; the Brethren were then summoned, of course bearing no weapons of any kind, it being a place dedicated to peace, and the Assembly was opened by the Master, who first acquainted them with the proposed inauguration of the candidate, dispatching a brother to prepare him.

"The messenger, in imitation of an ancient heathen custom, suggested to his companion that he should assume the demeanor of a suppliant; he was then stripped of all weapons and every thing of metal taken from him; he was divested of half his garments, and with his eyes bound and breast and left foot bared he stood at the door of the hall, which was opened to him after three distinct knocks. The Junior Warden conducted him to the Master, who made him kneel and repeat a prayer.

"The candidate was then led three times round the hall of the Gild, halting at last at the door and putting his feet together in the form of a right angle, that he might in three upright steps place himself in front of the Master. Between the two, lying open on the table, was a New Testament, a pair of Compasses, and a Mason's square, over which, in pursuance of an ancient custom, he stretched out his right hand, swearing to be faithful to the duties to which he pledged himself, and to keep secret whatever had been or might be thereafter made known to him in that place.

"The bandage was then removed from his eyes, the three Great Lights were shown him, a new apron bound round him, the password given him, and his place in the hall of the Gild pointed out to him.



"The manner of knocking and gripe of the hand were and are the same as those now used by the Apprentices in Freemasonry. After the Master had inquired if any one had anything else to submit to the decision of the Assembly, he closed the proceedings with the usual knocks of the Stonemason's hammer.

"At the banquet which invariably succeeded the reception of the candidate, which feasts were always opened and closed with prayer, the chief Master proposed to drink the health of the newly accepted Brother in the drinking-cup of the Brotherhood called Willcommen, to which the Brother replied by drinking to the welfare of the whole Fraternity. At that time, as now, and in all other Gilds, healths were drunk with three times three; the cup was taken hold of with a glove or pocket-handkerchief, the cover lifted off, and lastly it was carried to the lips; the cup was emptied in three separate draughts and replaced on the table in three separate motions."

The minuteness with which these details are given makes them very interesting, but at the same time it makes them very suspicious. We therefore require to relieve our doubts with establishing the full proof of the fact, by documents of the same period of time which shall be just as thorough and complete in the details, and this is a want that has not been supplied.

Some points, however, in this described initiation, are supported by satisfactory evidence, beside which we are enabled to draw fair conclusions from the authorities of the time in question or from related and connected circumstances which satisfactorily support and confirm other points.

Thus we find that the mediæval Freemasons, at least from the middle of the 15th century, were a secret society, that is to say, an association of Craftsmen, who were in possession of certain secrets that were imparted only to those who were members of the Fraternity. These secrets were withheld from all other persons, though they might be of the same Craft, but who had not been made free of the Fraternity or Gild. This conclusion as to the mediæval Freemasons is duly substantiated by the Ordinances, Statutes, or Constitutions, French, English, and German of that period.

We have seen in the French regulations of Stephen Boileau it is said that Freemasons may employ as many assistants and



servants as they please provided they do not show them any point of their trade.

The Statutes of Strasburg forbid any workman to instruct any one in any part if he be not of the Craft.

The English Charges impress upon the Freemason to keep secret the counsels "of Lodge and Chamber and all other Counsels that ought to be kept by way of Masonhood."

Now the fact that there were secrets to be kept by the association necessarily required that there should be some safe-guard or check imposed upon the members, by which they should be reminded of the importance and necessity of preserving their exclusiveness and their identity as a secret society.

But there could not possibly be a better method of securing such a safeguard than to impart to the admission of each member into the fraternity a deeply impressive character derived from the solemnity of a formal initiation.

That method has been adopted in all ages and in all countries. The ancient formula: "Depart, ye Profane," has been pronounced whenever secrets, however valueless, were to be communicated to an aspirant or initiate.

We may therefore accept it as an undoubted fact, substantiated by direct allusions in the old Statutes that the mediæval Fraternity of Stonemasons or Stonecutters was in Germany, as well as in every other country where they had become established, a secret society.

What these secrets really were presents an interesting field for enterprising inquiry, but this research must, however, be deferred to another chapter.

That this initiation was accompanied by an oath or obligation of secrecy is not only a natural conclusion which we are authorized to draw from the lessons of experience but is a fact thoroughly proved by the old statutes and regulations that have come down to us through the centuries.

Thus in most of the English Charges we have this sentence, curiously enough put in Latin, as if the conduct of this ceremony was to be concealed under the veil of a dead language.

¹ As in the "Æneas" of Vergil, vi, 258, "Procul, O procul, este, Profani!" (Hence, O far hence, be ye, ye profane!) "Profane" being of course the same as "outsiders," those outside the temple or fane.



The Atchison Haven manuscript, dated by its writer 1666, has a curious variation of the "Tunc unus" which runs thus: Tunc unus ex suis membris (Bro. E. L. Hawkins, discussing the Evolution of Masonic Ritual in *Transactions*, Quatuor Coronati Lodge, page 15, vol. xxvi, part 1, says this "suis membris" is probably a copyist's error for the usual "senioribus," meaning the elders) teneat librum et ille vel illi ponant manum super librum et jurent uno præcepto & oath. (Let one of their number hold the Book and let one or more lay his hand on the Book and swear by one command and oath.) ²

Bro. Hawkins says, page 11 of the above essay on the Evolution of Masonic Ritual, that "The fact that this direction is almost always in Latin seems to me a great argument in favor of the theory that modern Freemasonry is a lineal descendant of the Roman Colleges in which according to Dr. Mackey there actually was a class called 'Seniores.'"

In the Steinmetzen Ordinances of 1462 it is provided that when the Parlirer, or Warden, is inducted into office he takes an oath addressed to the Saints. But it is very worthy of remark that this oath was not taken as in modern times on the square and compasses, but on the gauge and square. This would impugn the correctness of the description given by Findel that on the table was a New Testament, and on it a square and compasses. The gauge and square seem to have been the mediæval symbols which accompanied the book in the solemnity of the obligation.

There is no evidence of the existence in the *Bauhütten*, or Lodges, of such a system of government as is found in the Lodges of the Modern Freemasons, where as an invariable rule there are a Master and two Wardens.



¹ Tunc unus ex senioribus teneat librum et ille vel illi potiat vel apposuerunt manus sub librum et tunc præcepta deberent legi. We have the same passage in several manuscripts, but the Latin is no better.

² See "Old Charges," by W. J. Hughan, p. 81.

³ Die Eide strebe mit Maszstabe und Winkelmas zu den Heyligen, die gebende um dess Meisters Schaden zu bewaren. Ord., 1462, No. 18.

But the regulations of Strasburg and Torgau describe an officer whose place and powers were somewhere between those of the Master of the work and the Fellows or workmen and who was called the *Parlirer*.¹

From these regulations it is very evident that the *Parliver* performed many of the duties which we are accustomed to expect in English Freemasonry of the Warden, and which have been figuratively set forth among the symbolic duties of the Warden of a Lodge of Speculative Freemasons.

Thus the *Parlirer* was to be present in the morning at the opening, and in the evening at the closing of the Lodge, and he was with the Craft at their noontide meal.

The Parlirer paid the Craftsmen their wages, which was generally done at sunset of each day.

He is also supposed to have performed the duties of Secretary and Treasurer, that is to say, he kept the roll of the members and had charge of the finances of the Lodge.

The Parlirer was appointed by the Master, but in the appointment the latter was restricted by certain regulations. Thus the Strasburg Constitutions provide that no Master shall promote one of his apprentices to the office of Parlirer who is still in his years of apprenticeship. A similar rule is found in the English Charge which says that "no Brother can be a Warden until he has passed the part of a Fellow Craft."

Being thus invested with such important functions it may be supposed that the *Parlirer* was inducted into office with impressive ceremonies. We know that his installation was confirmed by the taking of a solemn oath on the Gospels and on the twenty-four-inch gauge and the square.

In the Stonecutters' Bauhütten of Germany, as in our modern Speculative Lodges, the office of Master was one of the highest importance.

All the Fellows or journeymen who were employed in the construction of the same building constituted a single Lodge and were under the government of the same Master. The Strasburg Constitutions are very plain on this point and leave no doubt of the fact. "Two Masters shall not share in the same

¹ The duties of a Parlirer are elaborately explained on the authority of the Constitutions, by Kloss in his "Freimaurerei in ihrer wahren Bedeutung."



work or building." 1 An exception is made in the case of a small building which can be finished in the space of a year. In such a work two Masters might engage.

The Master was pledged to keep his Lodge free from all discord and to administer justice in it fairly between the Fellows. For this purpose he was invested with absolute power to rule his Lodge, provided only that he governed it according to the ancient customs and rules of the Craft, and did not unjustly or harshly oppress the brethren.

In every district there was a Lodge over which a Master presided. Over all these Lodges there was a still higher officer, to whom appeals might be made where there was complaint of injustice or wrong.

These were the Masters who presided over the work — the Magister Operis,² Master of the Work, called in the German Constitutions, the Werkmeister. One of these officers heard both parties and appointed a day when the trial should take place, which was always in the place where the offense had been committed and the inquiry or court was held before the nearest Master who kept the Statutes.³

After an Apprentice had been promoted to the rank of Fellow, he was required, or permitted, to travel throughout Germany and to visit the most important towns and cities. The years employed in this pilgrimage were called his *Wanderjahre*—his years of travel.

During his travels the Fellowcraft was always received with kindness and treated with hospitality by every Lodge which he visited. A formula of salutation and reception was practiced by which, with certain signs of recognition and passwords, the stranger could make himself known to his brethren and secure a welcome.

When a traveling Fellow visited a Lodge for the first time, in some town where he had arrived on his journey, he knocked



¹ "Ordnungen der Strassburger Haupthütte," article 9.

² This title of "Magister Operis," or Master of the Work, came to the Stonemasons from the monks, and is a relic of the original churchly control of architecture. Ducange (Glossarium) says that it was "officium monasticum" — a monkish office, held by one who had the charge of public work. In the Masonic usage of the Middle Ages, it had the same meaning as Architect, Baumeister or Chief Builder of an edifice.

³ "Statutes of Strasburg," article 17.

three times distinctly. On being admitted, the visitor approached the Master, or in his absence the *Parlirer*, with three regular steps, all the brethren standing around.

The salutations of the traveling Craftsman were such phrases as these: "God guide you," or "God reward you, Master, Parlirer, and all good Companions." The Master or Parlirer having returned thanks, the Fellowcraft was submitted to an examination, which proving satisfactory he received such assistance as he needed, either in work, or if work could not then and there be obtained, in money sufficient to supply his immediate wants and to send him on to the next Lodge.

The regulations that relate to Apprentices are very plain and direct in the Strasburg Constitutions, much more so indeed than those of the English or Scottish Freemasons.

In the first place, no bastard could be accepted as an Apprentice, and the Master is directed to inquire earnestly whether the parents were duly united in lawful wedlock.

An Apprentice could not be made a *Parlirer*. On the same principle the English Statutes required a Warden to have passed the grade of Fellowcraft.

Apprentices, after they had served their years of apprenticeship, were required to travel for at least one year.

If one had served with a *Maurer*, that is to say with a common Mason who was not of the Gild, and desired to learn still more of his profession of a Freemason, he was required to serve three years as an Apprentice.

The term of apprenticeship was not to be less than five years.

An Apprentice who left his Master without sufficient reason, before serving out his full term of service, was put under the ban or blacklisted. No other Master was to receive him nor was any Fellow to work with him, until he had returned and completed his time, giving satisfaction to his Master.

An Apprentice wishing to marry must obtain the consent of his Master.

Apprentices do not appear to have met with the same consideration in the German regulations as they did in the English

¹ The examination given in the Constitutions-Buch of the Lodge Archimedes and which will be found in Krause, Fallou, Findel and other German writers, did not in the opinion of Dr. Mackey bear internal evidence of a date so early as the 13th or even the 14th century.



and in the Scottish, where they are spoken of as constituting a part of the great body of the Craft, and seem to have been intrusted with many of the mysteries of the trade, since they are solemnly warned not to reveal them.

An Apprentice who believed that he had not been justly dealt with might appeal for relief and redress to the Masters and Fellows of the district in which his Lodge was situated.

But no one can correctly understand the usages and customs of the mediæval Freemasons of Germany unless he has made himself acquainted with the Statutes enacted by the Assembly held in 1459 at Strasburg and modified by Statutes that were later on made into law at other places and by various rulings of the German Emperors.

Of all these laws, the Constitutions of Strasburg are the foundation. They were the earliest written Constitutions. Like the old English Charges they were probably, for the most part, the committal to writing of usages which had prevailed long before the dates they bear. Their similarity to the English Constitutions, to the Scottish Statutes and to the French Regulations, is evident. This likeness proves, very conclusively, that all these laws were at one time peculiar to a Fraternity of Builders who existed at a much earlier period and from whom the Gilds or Corporations of Freemasons in all these various countries sprang as from a common stock and source.

The reader has already been put in possession of the English, Scottish, and French Constitutions. Therefore it is proper, for a thorough understanding of the connection existing between all these bodies of Freemasons, that he should be able to compare those laws with those which prevailed among the German Steinmetzen.

We will on that account devote the next chapter to a translation of the Constitutions of Strasburg, adding such marginal remarks as may be necessary for their free understanding.



CHAPTER SIXTY-FIVE

THE SECRETS OF THE MEDIÆVAL FREEMASONS



HE Stonemasons of the Middle Ages had in their possession certain very important secrets. These secrets they religiously abstained from communicating to any other Freemasons who were not of the Fraternity. This circumstance is a fact of which there cannot be a doubt. But to discover what these secrets were is a

task that has puzzled the brains of more than one investigator.

We have seen that there were passwords, signs, and other methods of recognition. These were established to enable the members of the Craft to make themselves known in strange places and to strange brethren. Of course these things were simple matters of convenience forming the private part of a system not otherwise peculiar to the Freemasons, but which has, in all ages, been practiced by every association of men who desired to preserve an exclusive organization.

But these modes of recognition did not constitute the only secrets of the Freemasons. There were other things that bound them together a united sodality or brotherhood having in every country the same aims and objects. Such secrets as existed among the Fraternity were of far more personal value and importance than any arbitrary code of signals adopted as a means of communication and mutual recognition when one brother first met another.

We find the evidence very plain. All the old Constitutions and Regulations show clearly that the Freemasons were in possession of secrets which the members of the fraternity were strictly forbidden to give or explain to outsiders. Thus the Strasburg Constitution forbids a Master or Fellow Craft to instruct anyone who is not of the Craft in any part belonging to Freemasonry.

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Again, there was in the Lodge a certain book which was privately kept by the Master under an oath that he would permit no part of it to be copied. It is evident that this book must have contained something else besides the Statutes, because a book of mere regulations would hardly have been invested with such a character of secrecy.

The earliest of the English Constitutions, that known as the Halliwell or Regius manuscript, is still more definite and clear on this subject. The third point — tercius punctus — is a warning to Apprentices to keep the secrets of the Craft which have been entrusted to them. An Apprentice was to keep closely to himself the counsel of his Master and his Fellows; he was to reveal to no man matters which had been privately discussed (the prevetyse of the chamber), nor what had been done in the Lodge:

"The thrydde poynt most be severele,
With the prentes knowe hyt wele.
Hys Mayster conwsel he kepe and close
And hys felows by hys goode purpose;
The prevetyse of the chamber telle he no mon,
Ny yn the logge whatsever they done;
Whatsever thou heryst or syste hem do,
Telle hyt no mon, whersever thou go;
The conwsel of halle and eke of bowre,
Kepe hyt wel to gret honowre
Lest hyt wolde torne thyself to blame,
And brynge the craft ynto gret shame." 1

Surely it seems scarcely capable of a doubt that these secrets were of an architectural nature. The architects and builders who invented the Gothic style of architecture, and built all the refigious edifices of the Middle Ages, and who, as Hope says, whatever might be the locality in which they were placed, either north, south, east, or west, derived their science from a central school, must have been in possession of certain principles of their art which they kept privately to themselves. From the most distant points whither these "Traveling Freemasons" might have wandered, they maintained, with their brethren of the Craft, a con-

1 "Halliwell or Regius manuscript," lines 275-286.



stant correspondence, and communicated to each other the minutest improvement in their art.¹

In the 10th century the science of geometry is supposed to have first given its aid to architecture by the learned Gerbert, who from the Archbishopric of Ravenna had been advanced, in the year 999, to the papacy, under the name of Sylvester II. Mosheim 2 says of him that his genius was extensive and sublime, embracing all the branches of literature, but more particularly that of mathematics. Gerbert's studies in geometry were so far beyond the attainments of the age in which he lived that his geometrical figures were regarded by the monks as magical operations, and he himself considered as a wizard and a disciple of Satan.

To Gerbert Europe is said to have been indebted for the introduction of the Arabic numerals. These he brought from Cordova, in Spain, where he spent several years among the Moors in acquiring the language and the learning of the Arabians.

We need not go so far as to subscribe to the opinion of some writers who hold that the builders of the 10th century were placed in possession of the method of applying geometric science to the secrets of architecture. But we do think it highly probable that by his learning as a mathematician Gerbert gave the first impetus to the study of geometry by the monkish and the lay architects of his times. This led to the application of the principles of that science at a little later period to the art of building, so as to develop into the system of geometrical secrets, which distinguished the builders of the Gothic style, or the Freemasons of the Middle Ages.

Lord Lindsay, in his Sketches of the History of Christian Art, significantly alludes to this possession of architectural secrets as an important element in the strength and capacity of these mediæval Freemasons. His language is well worth quotation. Speaking of the symbolic style of architecture — an architecture in which everything was made to serve the expression of religious ideas by means of symbolism, which, beginning in Lombardy, had spread



¹ Hope, "Historical Essay on Architecture," p. 233. The whole object of this part of Hope's work is to show that the Freemasons who issued from Lombardy and spread over Europe after the 10th century were in possession of certain privately cherished rules of building construction which constituted the secrets of their great Fraternity.

² John Lawrence Mosheim, "An Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern."

over all Europe, both north and south of the Alps — Lord Lindsay gives the following as the cause of that diffusion:

"What chiefly contributed to its diffusion over Europe, was the exclusive monopoly in Christian architecture, conceded by the Popes toward the close of the 8th century, to the Masons of Como, then, and for ages afterward, when the title of Magistri Comacini had long been absorbed in that of 'Free and Accepted Masons,' associated as a craft or brotherhood in art and friend-ship. A distinct and powerful body, composed eventually of all nations, concentrating the talent of each successive generation, with all the advantages of accumulated experience and constant mutual communication — imbued, moreover, in that age of faith, with the deepest Christian reverence, and retaining their advantages unchallenged till their proscription in the 15th and 16th centuries — we cannot wonder that the Freemasons should have carried their art to a pitch, which now that their secrets are lost, it may be considered hopeless to attempt to rival."

Paley, in his Manual of Gothic Architecture, touches rather tenderly on this subject. He thinks that little or nothing has ever come to light of the secret system which the Freemasons adopted in building, nor of the organization of their body, except that it was of the Church of Rome and under the favor and rule of the Pope. He supposes, however, that there was some central school whence came all the rules which were developed in a positive identity of architectural details in the minutest points; or if there were no such school, that the Master Masons went about like missionaries teaching these principles.²

Elsewhere, in the same work Paley becomes more clear in respect to these secrets, and he intimates that they consisted in an application of the principles of geometry to architecture. It is, he says, certain that geometry lent its aid in the planning and designing of buildings, and the methods of application were, he thinks, evidently "profound secrets in the keeping of the Free-masons." ³

Paley deals at some length with this theory. He supposes that the equilateral triangle was probably the basis of most structural



¹ "Sketches of the History of Christian Art," ii, p. 14.

² "Manual of Gothic Architecture," chap. vi, p. 210.

^{3 &}quot;Manual of Gothic Architecture," chap. iii, p. 78.

formations, as it is exhibited in a majority of pointed arches as well as in the *Vesica Piscis*, a prominent mystic symbol of the mediæval Freemasons.¹

This theory is greatly strengthened by the fact — which was probably not known to Paley, or at least he does not refer to it — that the equilateral triangle is one of the most important and significant of the symbols of the Speculative Freemasons. These builders indeed have founded most of their symbolism on geometrical principles borrowed from or suggested by the practices of the mediæval Operative Freemasons, who were their examples and leaders.

Michelet, in his *History of France*,² has some very profound remarks on this subject of the secret of the mediæval Freemasons. He shows that it was geometrical and consisted in an application of the science of numbers used in a mystical sense to the art of building according to the principles of Gothic architecture, the latter being of course the peculiar style of the Freemasons.

He illustrates this view from examples furnished by cathedrals built by the Fraternity from the 11th century onward. His views are worth careful consideration.

Michelet says that this geometry of beauty, as he calls it, is conspicuous in the type of Gothic architecture as exhibited in the Cathedral of Cologne. This building is a methodical construction which seems to have grown in its appropriate proportions with a regularity equal to that of the formation of crystals. The cross of this church is strictly deduced from the figure by which Euclid constructs the equilateral triangle. The numbers 10 and 12, with their divisors and their multiples, were those which guided and controlled all the measures of the building.

Of these, 10 was the human number, because it was that of the fingers; 12 was the divine number, being astronomical in its

¹ See the Mackey-Hughan-Hawkins "Encyclopedia of Freemasonry," article "Vesica Piscis." Note that the first problem of "Euclid," Book I, on the bisection of a line into two equal parts, shows the "Vesica Piscis" drawn by the intersection of two circles having their centers respectively at the ends of the line and having radii equal to the length of the line. The first place of this problem in practical geometry has undoubtedly some influence on the prominence it held among the early Freemasons.

² "Histoire de France," by M. Michelet. Brussels, 1840. The same views had been previously announced by Boisserée in his description of the Cathedral of Cologne, and Michelet acknowledges his indebtedness to that writer.



relations. To these 7 was added as the number of the planets. The inferior parts of the building are modeled on the square, and these are subdivided into the octagon or eight-sided figure; the superior parts are modeled on the triangle and are developed in the hexagon or six-sided figure.

The arcade, thrown from one pillar to another, is fifty feet wide, and this number is repeated throughout the building in some of its multiples. Thus the side-aisles are 25 feet, or one-half the width of the arcade; the façade or front is thrice its width, or 150 feet. The entire length of the church is three times its entire breadth, or nine times the width of the arcade. The breadth of the whole church is equal to the length of the choir, of the nave, and to the height of the middle of the roof. The proportion of the length to the height is as 2 is to 5.

Finally, the numbers of the arcade and the side-aisles are repeated externally in the counter-foils and buttresses. There are seven chapels of the choir, which is the number of the gifts of the Holy Ghost and of the Sacraments according to the Catholic Church, and the choir is supported by twice seven columns.

This liking for mystical numbers occurs in all the churches of the mediæval period. Thus the Cathedral of Rheims has 7 entrances, and both it and the Cathedral of Chartres have 7 chapels around the choir. The choir of Notre Dame, at Paris, has 7 arcades. The cross-aisle is 144 feet long, which is 16 times 9, and 42 feet wide, which is 6 times 7. The towers of Notre Dame are 204 feet high, which is 17 times 12, the astronomical number. The length of the church of Notre Dame at Rheims is 408 feet, or 34 times 12. The Cathedral of Notre Dame has 297 columns; but 297 divided by 3 gives 99, and this divided by 3 again produces 33. The naves of St. Ouen, at Rouen, and of the Cathedrals of Strasburg and Chartres, are of the same length, or 244 feet. The Sainte Chapelle, at Paris, is 110 feet long and 27 feet wide, but 110 is 10 times 11, and 27 is 3 times 9.

In these few examples we have developed the numbers 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12, all of which have been retained in the mystical system of the Speculative Freemasons. Their appearance and frequent use among the mediæval Freemasons could have been neither by an accident nor a coincidence, but must have arisen from a predetermined selection.



"To whom, then," says Michelet, "belonged this science of numbers, this divine mathematics? To no mortal man, but to the Church of God."

Under the favor of the Church, in chapters and abbeys, the secret was transmitted together with instruction in the mysteries of Christianity. The Church alone could accomplish these miracles of architecture. She would summon a whole people to complete a monument. A hundred thousand men labored at once on that of Strasburg. Such was their zeal that they did not suffer night to interrupt their labors, but continued them by the light of torches. The Church spent centuries on the slow accomplishment of a perfect work. Renaud de Montauban, for instance, bore stones for the building of the Cathedral of Cologne, and to this day it is still in process of erection.¹

Michelet has found in the geometrical proportions observed in the construction of religious edifices, a following of the principles of Roman art laid down by Vitruvius and by Pliny. Thus in the Gothic style of architecture he notes that the Freemasons have preserved the traditions of antiquity.² Here, then, we see plainly another link in the chain connecting the Corporations of Craftsmen of the Middle Ages with the Roman builders, the Collegia Artificum.

Michelet thus defines the secret or secrets of the mediæval Freemasons to have consisted in an application of the principles of geometry to the processes of building. He has therefore taken that view of the subject which is now very generally accepted by Masonic and other writers upon the science and art of the ancients.

Findel says that the secrets of the Stonemasons consisted of instruction in architecture and in mystical numbers; of the latter he says that 3, 5, 7, and 9 were especially sacred. But Michelet has shown that while the numbers mentioned by Findel were highly esteemed, the numbers 10 and 12, or the human and divine numbers, were deemed the most important, and were the most used in symbolization. He says, also, that the colors gold or yellow, blue and white, were sacred as having special reference to the art.



¹ "Histoire de France," liv. iv, chap. ix, p. 369. (The Cathedral of Cologne has since been completed.)

² See the above work.

The symbolism of colors, as well as of the tools of the Craft, have been described by Findel and some other German writers. But we may not unfairly conclude that this did not form any part of those secrets of the Craft the knowledge of which distinguished the members of the Gild or Fraternity of Freemasons from the common workmen. To the latter these secrets were never communicated, and to them they never could be imparted except by a positive violation of the Gild law.

We consider it is therefore a matter of but very little importance — in fact of none at all — whether M. Michelet is or is not correct in crediting to the Church the office of inventing the architectural symbolism which is so frequent a feature of all the religious edifices of the Middle Ages. It is true that the Christian Church had scarcely emerged from the chrysalis or childhood state in which it had existed during the apostolic era, when dogmas were taught without figurative illustration, before it began to impress its religious instructions upon its disciples by means of symbols.¹

But as early as the 12th century at least, the Freemasons had begun to cut adrift from any advisory control by Church officials, and had established themselves as an independent body of Craftsmen. It would be safe to suppose, as Boisserée contends, that both geometrical architecture and architectural symbolism were the invention rather of skilled professional architects than of monks or prelates who were not practical workers in stone. The Church, however, must have undoubtedly exercised some influence in early times on the system.

At the earliest periods of the rise of Church architecture, the abbots and bishops, taking, as Fergusson says, some former building as a model, made their designs and by word of mouth corrected its mistakes or suggested improvements to the builder.²

But afterwards the Freemasons, the professional stonecutters and architects, took upon themselves the task of designing as well as of erecting the churches and other buildings. The methods of geometrical and mathematical construction became arcana or hidden mysteries, confined to the members of the Gild of Free-



¹ This is not the place to discuss at length and in detail the question of how much the Free-masons were indebted to the Church for their symbolism. We shall return to the subject.

² "History of Architecture in all Countries," i, p. 480.

masons and forming those secrets, so often mentioned, and which became neglected or lost at the decline of Operative Freemasonry.

The gradual breaking away of the professional Freemasons from the Church control, and the improvement in the science of architecture which, of course, developed that geometrical system which the wiser Craftsmen kept to themselves, has been described by the Rev. G. D. Whittington in his *Historical Survey of the Ecclesiastical Antiquities of France*; and though what he says has direct reference to that country, it can with perfect propriety be applied to Germany.

The ancient writers often mention instances of an abbot giving a plan which his household assisted in carrying into execution. This was certainly the case at the beginning of the revival of learning after the decline of the Roman Empire. Then the arts were almost exclusively cultivated by the clergy.

But it is equally certain that the officials of the Church encouraged the professors of the arts among the laity. Especially in the arts of building there were to be found men of superior skill and intelligence who, being brought from distant places by the liberality of the prelates, were added to the common stonecutters and carpenters who were found in the various cities, and whose mere manual labor was used by the monks in the construction of religious edifices. This association, elevated by the influence of the superior intelligence of the more skilled workmen, and assisted by the authority of the Church, secured employment and protection. The members gradually increased in numbers and improved in science until, at length, they produced from among themselves the most able artificers.

Thus it was that the builders were, about the 12th century, able to withdraw from their dependence on, and from their connection with, the officials of the Church. They formed that Fraternity of Freemasons who were distinguished in every country where they appeared, from the common herd of Craftsmen — the *Maurer* of the Germans and the "Rough Masons" of the English — by the possession of important secrets connected with the art of building.

"So studiously," says Halliwell, "did they conceal their secrets, that it may be fairly questioned whether even some of those who 'Called also "Roughlayers."

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were admitted into the Society of Freemasons were wholly skilled in all the mysterious portions of the art." 1

Doubtless in this organization, as in every association of men, there must have been a variety of skill and talent. But the fraternal spirit of the Craft led to a willingness on the part of the best instructed to supply the needs of their less informed brethren. We read in one of the earliest of the old English Constitutions it is provided that if a Freemason be wiser and more subtile than his fellow working with him in his Lodge or any other place, and he perceives that the inefficient brother must leave the stone upon which he is working for want of skill, and he can teach him how to work the stone better, he shall instruct him and help him; that the more love increase among them, and that the work of the Lord be not lost.² A similar regulation will be found in the Constitutions of Strasburg.

Thus, though there were of course some workmen more skilled than others, and though they were strictly exclusive in confining their knowledge of the secrets of their art to their own Fraternity, yet those secrets were freely imparted to every member who desired the knowledge.

The theory that the secret of the mediæval Freemasons consisted in an application of the principles of geometry to architecture enables us to explain many things otherwise far from clear in the old records of the Operative Freemasons and in the modern rituals of the Speculative Free and Accepted Masons. We are thus enabled to understand all the allusions made to geometry as the most important of the sciences and as the synonym of Freemasonry. Dr. Anderson, most probably with some old manuscript before him, the suggestions of which he followed, commenced the Book of Constitutions with an essay of praise, not on Freemasonry, but on Geometry, which he declared was the foundation of Freemasonry and Architecture.

In the second edition of the *Constitutions* he says that the Freemasons always had a book in manuscript which, in addition to the Charges and Regulations, contained the history of architecture, in order to show the antiquity of the Craft or Art, "and how it gradually arose upon its solid foundation, the noble science



[&]quot;1Archæologia," vol. xxviii, p. 445.

² Cooke manuscript, line 888.

of Geometry." ¹ The discovery since his time of many copies of this manuscript book of *Constitutions* confirms what he here says of the connection of Geometry with Freemasonry.

Elsewhere he writes in the same strain of Geometry and Freemasonry as identical arts. Thus he says: "No doubt Adam taught his sons Geometry," and "Seth took equal care to teach Geometry and Masonry to his offspring." But the best illustration in the work of Anderson, of the theory that the secret of the Freemasons consisted in the application of the principles of Geometry to Architecture, is his statement that Noah's ark "was certainly fabricated by Geometry and according to the rules of Architecture."

All the old English manuscript Constitutions maintain the same idea of the very close connection, and, indeed, identity, of Geometry and Freemasonry.

Thus in the earliest of them, the Halliwell or Regius manuscript, whose date is generally agreed to be about the year 1390, it is said:

In that time through good Geometry, The honest Craft of good Masonry Was ordained and made in this manner.

In the Cooke manuscript, whose date is about sixty years later, we are told that "Isidore saith in his *Etymologies*, that Euclid calleth the Craft geometry." In the York manuscript, of the date of 1600, we are still more distinctly told that "Euclid was the first that gave it the name of Geometry, the which is now called Masonry."

But it is hardly necessary to multiply the instances in which the old Constitutions have referred to Geometry as the foundation of Freemasonry, or as an art indeed identical with it. All of these references to Geometry are but additional proofs of what has been already said, namely, that the great secret of the mediæval Freemasons consisted in the application of the principles of Geometry to the art of building by methods known only

¹ Anderson's "Constitutions," second edition, 1738, p. vii. Krause says ("Kunsturkunden," i, 28) that Geometry is to be here taken in a double sense: First, as the foundation of architecture, and second, as the social design of the brotherhood of Freemasons. But this appears to be really a "distinction without a difference." Architecture and the design of the Freemasons are, in the present view of the subject, one and the same thing.



to themselves, and which they developed in the Gothic style of architecture invented by them. This secret perished with the decline of the Operative Fraternity, or by its passage into the Speculative Association.

Nevertheless, this Speculative Association, the Free and Accepted Masons of the present day, have retained the memory of their descent from these Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages by a sacred preservation in their ritual of a reference to Geometry as the "First and noblest of the sciences and the one on which the superstructure of Freemasonry is founded."

The retention in the ritual of the letter G, the earliest and the most freely used of all the symbols of Speculative Freemasonry, is an ever present and a loudly speaking testimony in every Lodge that the brethren there assembled have not forgotten that the great secret of their predecessors was a geometrical one.

We must therefore conclude, even if there were no other proof, that the mediæval Freemasons did all their work according to certain principles of Geometry, the method of applying which was known only to themselves. It is equally clear that therefore the science of Geometry was to them a most important and indispensable part of their Craft, and which entitled it peculiarly to the name of a "Mystery," a word applied indifferently to mean a trade or a secret.¹

The very fact that these Freemasons were possessed of important secrets in reference to the art and practice of building, and to preserve their own preëminence, made it necessary that they should have some method of keeping these secrets for themselves. By some such means they could prevent the intrusion of strangers and workmen who were not of their Gild or Fraternity into a community of labor with them and the unlawful taking of any part of their private mystical knowledge.

Now the only method by which these ends could be attained was that of a secret code or system of signs and words by which any one of these Freemasons could make himself known to the

¹ There is doubt among students as to whether "Mystery" comes from the old French "mestier," a trade, or from the Latin "mysterium," a secret. The word has always been used in both senses. Thus Chaucer says the reeve had learned "a good mester, he was a well good wright a carpenter" ("Canterbury Tales," Pro. 613), and Wiclif speaks of "the mysterie whych was kepte secrete since the worlde beganne." The ancient legal term, existing even at this day for an art, trade, or occupation is "Mystery."



others, when he might be in a strange place, and thus secure to himself a part in the benefits of the association. A form of reception or initiation would also, probably, be adopted, either for further security or for the purpose of giving solemn impression to the admission of new members.

We have the best historical records to prove that modes of recognition were adopted for the purpose named by the mediæval Freemasons, and that they had a form of initiation. Just what that ritual was precisely as to form we are in doubt, notwithstanding the authority of certain German writers, some of whom have undertaken to give it in full.

The English and Scottish authorities — that is to say, the manuscript records of that day — certainly supply us with no information on that subject, save that there was some formula of reception for an Apprentice, a Fellow, and a Master. The authorities indicate that the same formula was used on each occasion, or perhaps that one form of reception only was used, and on only one occasion. There is a great amount of uncertainty on this subject which can be removed only by future investigations and by the discovery of more nearly complete manuscripts. If any such documents exist, they have not yet been brought to light.

The German writers, however, have furnished from papers in their possession many almost minute details of the customs of the Traveling Freemasons of that country and which in the course of time must have extended into other lands.

The Book of Constitutions of the Lodge Archimedes, at Altenburg, contains an examination of a German Steinmetz, which has been copied by Krause, by Findel, and by other writers, and which is declared by all of them to be a genuine document. We do not see any reason to doubt its truthful appearance. We give it as it has been published in Findel's History of Freemasonry, with a few alterations or amendments that we supply on the authority of Krause's copy of the same document.

When a Fellow, traveling in his "Wander Year," or at any time in search of employment, arrived at a strange *Hütte* or Lodge, he approached, says Findel, by three regular steps, and knocking three times, was admitted. Then with the brethren all standing around, their feet placed at right angles, he saluted the Master, or in his absence, the *Parlirer* or Warden, with the following salu-



tations, which were, "God greet you — God guide you — God reward you — Master, *Parlirer* and Fellows." After some other mutual courteous greetings, the examination proceeded as follows:

- Q. Worthy Fellow-craftsman, are you a Letter Freemason (ein Briefer) or a Salute Freemason (ein Grüsser)?
 - A. I am a Salute Freemason.
 - Q. How shall I know you to be such?
 - A. By my Salute and the words of my mouth.
 - Q. Who has sent you?
- A. My Worshipful Master, the worshipful townsmen, and the Worshipful Craft of Freemasons at N.N.
 - Q. For what purpose?
 - A. For honorable advancement, instruction, and honesty.
 - Q. What are instruction and honesty?
 - A. The customs and usages of the Craft.
 - Q. When do they begin?
- A. As soon as I have honestly and faithfully finished my Apprenticeship.
 - Q. When do they end?
 - A. When death breaks my heart.
 - Q. How shall we know a Freemason?
 - A. By his honesty.
 - Q. What kind of a Freemason are you?
 - A. A Mouth-mason (ein Mund-Maurer).
 - Q. How shall we know that?
 - A. By my Salute and mouth speech.
- Q. Where was the Worshipful Craft of Freemasonry in Germany instituted?
 - A. In Magdeburg, at the Cathedral.¹
 - Q. Under what monarch?
 - A. Under the Emperor Charles II., in the year 876.
 - Q. How long did that Emperor reign?
 - A. Three years.



¹ A tradition of the German Freemasons is to the effect that they were first formed into a brotherhood at the building of the Cathedral of Magdeburg, which was commenced about the year 1211. Bishop Lucy, a few years before, in 1202, created a company of builders for the construction of the Cathedral of Winchester. Hence Findel suggests that they were most probably the founders of the Fraternity of Freemasons in England. We have no positive authority for this belief but the coincidence of time is at least remarkable.

- Q. How was the first Freemason called?
- A. Adon Hieronymus, and the working tool was invented by Walkan.
 - Q. How many words has a Freemason?
 - A. Seven.
 - Q. What are for the Words?
 - A. Riganische, Riganse, Rigaische.
 - Q. How do they go?
 - A. God bless honesty.

God bless honorable wisdom.

God bless a Worshipful Craft of Freemasons.

God bless a Worshipful Master.

God bless a Worshipful Parlirer (or Warden).

God bless a Worshipful Society.

God bless an honorable advancement here and there and everywhere, on the water and on the land.

- Q. What is secrecy in itself?
- A. Earth, fire, air, and snow, through which to a Worshipful Master's advancement I go.
 - Q. What do you carry under your hat?
 - A. A praiseworthy wisdom.
 - Q. What do you carry under your tongue?
 - A. A praiseworthy truth.
 - Q. Why do you wear an apron?
 - A. To do honor to the Worshipful Craft and for my profit.
 - Q. What is the strength of our Craft?
 - A. That which fire and water cannot destroy.
 - Q. What is the best for a Freemason? 1
 - A. Water.

Such was according to the Konstitutions Buch of the Altenburg Lodge of "Archimedes of the Three Tracing Boards," the catechism or examination of a Freemason in the Middle Ages in Germany.

Evidently its only design was to establish a system of questions, the capacity of giving the correct answers to which were to prove the just claim of the person questioned to be a member

¹ Findel gives this last question and answer thus: "Q. What is the best part of a wall? A. Union." There is certainly more sense apparently in this than in the formula as we have given it. But it is the language of Krause, who quotes the "Konstitutions Buch" in his "Drei Ältesten Kunsturkunden."



of the Gild. In that respect this catechism resembles the one which is said to have been in use among the English Freemasons at the time of the organization of Speculative Freemasonry.

One of the passages in this mediæval series of questions and answers presents the doggerel form of verse which is so common in the early English catechisms, and hence we find therein another resemblance. In the original German catechism we find this question and answer:

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"Was ist Heimlichkeit an sich selbst?"

"Erde, Feuer, Luft, und Schnee,

Wodurch ich auf eines Ehrbaren Meister's Beförderung geh."
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Which may be translated:

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"What is Secrecy in itself?"

"Earth, Fire, Air, and Snow,

Through which to a Worshipful Master's advancement I go."
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This must strongly remind us of the doggerel verses in the English catechisms. So common indeed was this practice of rough rhyming in all the old rituals that its presence may be deemed a proof of relative age, as its absence would be evidence of want of truth. The long ritual of the Royal Order of Scotland, which is among the oldest of the Advanced Degrees, is made up almost entirely from beginning to end of crude clumsy verses, which even for doggerel are for the most part very inferior in structure.

The secret words in this catechism are also worthy of remark. Of Riganse, with its variations, it is impossible to trace the origin. The supposition in the Constitution Book that it is a corruption of the English "wriggle," is too childish for consideration. It is said that the number of the letters being seven is significant. Hence Krause, who admits that this is a mangled word, thinks the letters may be composed of the initials of the names of the seven liberal arts and sciences. But this theory, we think, is wholly unsound, and it must remain as another instance of the many tangles and knots that are almost beyond repair of the old Masonic manuscripts.

However, this is not so with the other words in this catechism, Adon Hieronymus and Walkan. The former word may be a variation of Adonhiram, who, Krause says, has been mixed up with either Hiram, the King of Tyre, or with Hiram Abif. Probably



the latter is the more likely because the person of that name in the Books of Kings and Chronicles is called "Adon" in some of the English Constitutions.¹

The word Walkan, evidently, is a variation of Tubal Cain. Mossdorf thinks it was meant for Vulcan. But this is by no means sure. Vulcan is never mentioned in any of the old Masonic records, and it is not probable that the Freemasons were at all acquainted with this pagan god of blacksmiths. On the other hand, the old Constitutions had made them familiar with the name of Tubal Cain, whom the Legend of the Craft had placed with the other children of Lamech as the founders of Freemasonry.

Here we see the close connection between the *Steinmetzen* of Germany and the Freemasons of England. Evidently they were both branches of the same common body of artists, and if we may judge from these two words they had the same legend.

Indeed, the Altenburg Constitution Book asserts that the forms of initiation and the ritual used by the German Stonemasons came in the first place from England.

This may have been so, though we have no direct or clear proof of the fact. If it were so it would not interfere with the claim that the other and greater secret of the Craft, that of building in the Gothic style and on geometric principles, came to both England and to Germany from the Craft school of Lombardy and the Masters of Como.

We have thus seen that the Freemasons of the Middle Ages — the *Steinmetzen*, Stonecutters or Stonemasons, as they have been variously called, were in possession of and were distinguished by two classes of secrets.

One of these classes consisted in the possession of certain methods of recognition by which one Freemason might know another, as the well-known phrase says, "in the dark as well as in the light."



¹ Hieronymites is used to mean the Gregorians, the Brethren of Good Will, the hermit order of Hieronymus or St. Jerome founded in the 14th century by Thomas of Siena and later settled in Spain with branches in Portugal, Italy, Tyrol, and Bavaria. Hieronymus was also the name of a king of Syracuse and of a Greek historian, Governor of Bœotia. We note these as further references for the student.

² Friedrich Mossdorf, a scholarly Freemason, born 1757, initiated 1777, died at Dresden, Germany, 1843. Edited a Handbook of Freemasonry and other works of much merit.

Now this class of secrets is not of any historical importance, nor was it peculiar to the Fraternity of Freemasons. Men at all times and in all countries when they unite into a brotherhood for the pursuit of any special object, certain details of which they desire to conceal from the world, carry out their exclusive desires and protect their secrecy by using some method of signs or passwords to guard them from the entrance of those who are not of their sodality, and are therefore to them as profanes, meaning those outside the Temple of the elect. We have ample proof that those who practiced the Pagan Mysteries of antiquity had this secret method of shielding from the uninitiated the ceremonies and the dogmas which they privately taught.

"Every trade, art, and occupation," said Harris, "has its secrets, which are not to be indiscriminately communicated to all who seek to obtain them without having undergone the necessary probation, and have not thus become members of the sodality, Gild or Craft."

The Freemasons of the Middle Ages did not, therefore, differ in this respect from other associations of a similar kind. Their possession of signs and words, by which they made themselves known to each other, is of no special importance in the history of the Craft except for the light it sheds in a relative way. If there can be shown any similarity or analogy between those signs and words used by the Freemasons of the present day and those which were practiced by the mediæval Freemasons, we should have another proof of the descent of the former as a Fraternity from the latter.

We believe such a similarity or analogy has been already shown in the course of our present investigations. The use among the German Stonemasons of such words as Walkan and Adon Hieronymus, which seem borrowed from "Tubal Cain" and "Adon Hiram" or "Adoniram," together with some similar terms found among the English and the Scotch Stonemasons is very significant. These words render it very probable that the secret methods of recognition in use among the Stonemasons or Masonic Corporations of the Middle Ages, have for the most part been preserved and are to this day employed by their successors, the Speculative Freemasons.

But the real secrets of the mediæval Freemasons were those whose loss is still regretted, and whose importance is testified to



by the fact universally admitted, that from the knowledge of them, and from their practical application, have resulted the magnificent architectural works of the Middle Ages. Some of these glorious specimens still remain; as the Cathedrals of Cologne and Strasburg, while of others, though timeworn and ill-treated, the ruins still attest the skill and the taste (unsurpassed in modern times) of their builders.

These secrets, which were the application of Geometry to the art of building, link closely the history of Freemasonry with the records of Gothic architecture. Thus these geometrical secrets of the builder's art acquire an importance far surpassing that of the former class, the methods of recognition.

The use of Geometry by the Freemasons of the Middle Ages in the practice of their profession as architects gave rise to geometrical symbols. The preservation of many of these by the Speculative Freemasons of our day is another proof of the succession of the later from the older society, and is in this way again of great historical importance in any account of the growth of the institution.

The geometrical symbols found in the instructions of modern or Speculative Freemasonry, such as the triangle, the square, the right angle, and the forty-seventh problem, may be considered as the débris of the "lost secrets" of the mediæval Stonemasons. These Craftsmen founded their operative art on the application to architecture of the principles of Geometry. Of this branch of the arts and sciences they were wont to say that "There is no handicraft that is wrought by man's hand but it is wrought by Geometry." So the modern Freemasons, imitating them in their reverence for that science (though not possessing the same knowledge of its principles), have drawn from it their most impressive symbols.

Thus we may easily explain the origin and the meaning of the phrase, "Geometrical Freemasons." This term was applied in the beginning of the 18th century to the Speculative Freemasons, who thus claimed to be considered as the successors of the Masonic Gilds of the Middle Ages, who had called themselves Freemasons and whose secrets were of a geometric character.

This claim, too often rejected or laid aside for the sake of seeking a more ancient but wholly mythical origin of Freema-



sonry, either from the Pagan Mysteries or from the Temple of Solomon, has rapidly gained ground among the Fraternity.

Evidently the Speculative Freemasons of the last century sought to strengthen their claim upon public and private esteem by applying to themselves the title of "Geometrical Freemasons," by which they intended to distinguish themselves from the Operative Freemasons of their own time. This was done just as the old Freemasons of the Middle Ages distinguished themselves, by the possession of geometrical secrets, from the "Rough Layers" or "Rough Masons." The latter were workmen not entitled to be called, and who were not called, "Freemasons," because they were not freemen of the Gild, were not in possession of those geometrical secrets, and were not therefore admitted into the brotherhood.

However, there are between the Speculative Freemasons, who date their organization from the year 1717, and the Freemasons of the Middle Ages, some very significant differences and some equally significant resemblances. These peculiarities will come more plainly in view when we treat later on of the change from Operative to Speculative Freemasonry.

CHAPTER SIXTY-SIX

GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE AND THE FREEMASONS



ROM what has been already shown by us, the reader will readily perceive that there was a very close connection between the Freemasons of the Middle Ages and that system of architecture which has been called the Gothic style.

But it is not our intention to enter into any elaborate study of the character and the origin

of that style. Such a discussion would be foreign to the design of the present work, which is a history not of architecture but of Freemasonry.

However, since it has been by general consent admitted that the Gothic style of architecture, if not invented by the mediæval Freemasons, was exclusively cultivated by them as the pattern for the buildings for religious purposes which they erected in every country of western Europe, during the period of from four to five centuries or perhaps more in which they flourished as a well-organized Fraternity.

Gothic architecture has therefore very justly been called the architecture of the Freemasons. It has, however, received other names, some of which are less fitting, no matter whether we look to the character of the style or to the history of its origin and its progress.

Sir Christopher Wren favored the theory that this style was brought into Europe by the Crusaders. He therefore called it the Saracenic style.

He maintains his theory with great skill, and we shall quote the passage from the *Parentalia*, even at the expense of some repetition, because, whatever may be thought of the Saracen origin credited to the Gothic style, we have the important testimony of this great architect to the Gild or corporation character of the Stonemasons of the Middle Ages. We find the following passages in the *Parentalia*:

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"The Holy War gave the Christians who had been there an idea of the Saracen works; which were afterwards by them imitated in the West; and they refined upon it every day, as they proceeded in building churches. The Italians (among which were some Greek refugees), and with them Frenchmen, Germans, and Flemings, joined into a fraternity of architects; procuring Papal bulls for their encouragement and particular privileges; they styled themselves Freemasons, and ranged from one nation to another, as they found churches to be built." 1

John Britton, an architect of much reputation, rejecting the Saracenic theory of Wren, uses the term "Christian Architecture" in preference to Gothic, as more akin, more correct, and more historical. He defines this phrase, "Christian Architecture," as one "applied to all the classes of buildings which were invented and erected by the Christians, and which essentially varied from the Pagan architecture of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. It includes all the varieties of designs used in churches and monasteries, from the 6th to the end of the 16th century." ²

T. G. Jackson, a professional architect, who has written a very readable little work on *Modern Gothic Architecture*, dissents from this view. He asserts that Gothic architecture was not exclusively connected with the system of the Christian Church, nor intended by its forms to symbolize Christian doctrine.

Gothic architecture is not, he says, the creation of any religious creed or doctrine. It is the offspring of modern European civilization. It is Christian, only because modern Europe is Christian. It is connected with the Church only so far as the Church enters into the composition of our social state as one among many elements.³

But a previous admission of the author upsets his theory that Gothic was not Christian architecture, except incidentally, and that its forms did not symbolize Christian doctrine.

"It is true," he says, "that this style was at first nurtured in the Church," and he explains that "amid the turmoil and confusion of society during the 11th and 12th centuries it was only in the kindly shelter of the cloister that learning and the peaceful



¹ "Parentalia," p. 304. This work is the Wren family records, published 1750.

² Britton, "Dictionary of the Architecture and Archæology of the Middle Ages," 1880.

^{3 &}quot;Modern Gothic Architecture," by T. G. Jackson, Architect, London, 1878, p. 103.

arts were able to live and grow; but it did not develop into a perfect style, it never shook off the traditions of that classic art from which it was derived, it never merged into an independent, energizing life, till the 13th century, when it passed from the hands of the clergy into those of the laity. Till then, all those great architects were clerks; since then they have mostly been laymen." 1

Now this admission is all that the most zealous advocates of the close relation borne by the Freemasons to Gothic architecture could require. It is not denied that in the earlier periods of the revival of art, the monastic institutions and the prelates of the Church, in whose hands were deposited all the seeds of learning, and who were the architects of that period, cultivated, almost as a necessity, the classic style which they borrowed from the Roman artificers.

But neither Gothic style nor corporations of Freemasons then existed. They both sprung into active life at the same time. Paley, in his classification, traces Gothic architecture in its different styles from the middle of the 12th to the middle of the 16th century.² This covers the very period in which the Freemasons of the Middle Ages present themselves as Gilds or a Fraternity.

Then architecture passed out of its classic form, Roman, Byzantine, Norman or what you please, and assumed that more symbolic form now called the Gothic.

This style, coming into existence at the very time that the lay builders left the control of the clergy and became independent architects with the organization of a Gild and under the name of Freemasons, was, it can not be doubted, from the agreement of circumstances, the invention of that Fraternity. It may, therefore, be accepted as a historical fact that Gothic architecture was the invention of the mediæval Freemasons.

This style, so full of high art, developed to profound symbolism, was that peculiar characteristic of the Freemasons of the Middle Ages, which distinguished them from the artisans of every other trade or profession, and in time when as a body of Operatives they were dissolved, enabled them to transmute themselves into a Speculative association founded on the teaching of moral and religious doctrines by architectural and geometrical symbols.



¹ "Modern Gothic Architecture," by T. G. Jackson, Architect, London, 1873, p. 99.

² Paley, "Manual of Gothic Architecture," p. 29.

We can not fairly appreciate this mediæval architecture if we confound it with the mere practice of building by laying one stone on another. The Freemasons, justly appreciative of the high aims of their profession, held themselves proudly aloof from the ordinary rough masons, who could do no more than build a wall or a house.

"Mediæval architecture," says Paley, "was the visible embodying of the highest feelings of adoration and worship, and holy abstraction; the expression of a sense which must have a language of its own and which could have utterance in no worthier or more significant way." ¹

These Freemasons became the preservers and teachers of the doctrines of their religious faith, and gave a moral in every sculptured form. Among their works, Shakespeare's moralizing Jacques might have well said that he could find "sermons in stones."

The Freemasons of the Middle Ages, coming originally from Lombardy and extending over Europe in the 12th and succeeding centuries, thus applied to their works the taste and skill and spirit of symbolism which they had originally learned from their Masters of Como. Meeting in the *Bauhütten*, the hut or Lodge, which they had erected near the building about to be constructed by their skill, they devised plans for the future edifice, which in almost every instance was one for religious purposes. To nothing secular or profane would they devote their art.

Hence arose the abbeys, churches, and cathedrals, which although now for the most part in ruins, present, even in wreck, such wonderful architectural beauty as to excite the admiration of every spectator, as well as the envy of modern artists, who have sought in vain to rival or even to imitate the old builders.

Speaking of the inventors of this system of architectural symbolism, Lord Lindsay calls the humble Lodges in which Freemasons studied together and produced their designs, "Parliaments of Genius." ²

They were possessed of wondrous skill in art, and were actuated purely by elevated religious thought. Yet have they passed away unknown save as parts of that vast association which had spread over all civilized countries, and who labored at their great

1 "Manual of Gothic Architecture," p. 5.



works with a noble sacrifice of self. Of the zeal with which they worked, Michelet cites one striking proof: "Ascend to the top-most points of those aerial spires which they were constructing, to heights which only the slater mounts with fear and trembling, and you will often find some masterpiece of sculpture, on which the pious workman had perhaps consumed his life, without the remotest expectation that the eye of man would ever behold its delicate, artistic tracing. On it there is no name, not a mark or a letter. He had worked not for human praise, but only for the glory of God and the health of his soul."

An English historian has thus expressed a similar view of these unselfish builders of old:

"The elaborate and costly ornaments which were lavished on architecture were meant to do God honor, though spending their beauties perhaps on some remote and secluded wilderness, to be witnessed only by the rude peasants of the neighborhood and the birds that hovered about the pinnacle." ²

Paley has been led to say, with great truth, that these ancient builders, working as a body and not as individuals, cared less about personal profit or celebrity than about the good of the Church. Therefore he concludes that if they had intended only to please the eye of man they would not have let their finest works stand alone in the midst of the marsh and the moor, 3 a view of the situation that is by no means unreasonable.

Gothic Architecture, as a name applied to the style of building practiced by the Freemasons of the Middle Ages, is by no means suggestive of its true origin or character. The opinion once held that it was the invention of the Goths, has long since been exploded. Notwithstanding the various theories that have been advanced at various times, it is now generally conceded that this distinct style was the system of building applied by the mediæval Freemasons to the erection of religious edifices.

Of this style, the features are the pointed arch, long lancet windows, clustered columns, and a tendency to vertical and ascending lines. Comparing it with the preceding styles, we see the whole design of building changed from the horizontal to the perpendicu-



¹ Michelet, "Histoire de France," p. 370.

² Rev. T. T. Blunt, "Sketch of the Reformation in England," p. 76.

³ "Manual of Gothic Architecture," p. 82.

lar, "we might almost say," to borrow the words of Paley, "from earthly to heavenly, from Pagan to Christian." 1

It began to make its appearance toward the close of the 12th century, and having been adopted, or more properly speaking invented, by the association of Freemasons spread from Italy into France, into Germany, and into England, as well as every other country of Europe where these architects and builders traveled.

Governor Pownall wrote a very able article containing Observations on the Origin and Progress of Gothic Architecture, and on the Corporation of Free Masons, Supposed to Be the Establishers of it as a Regular Order,² in which he admits that William of Sens had used the same style a century before in the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Canterbury, yet he asserts that the Corporations of Freemasons "were the first architects who reduced it to and introduced it as a regular order."

He further asserts that the Corporation which existed in England was instituted by a similar organization from abroad, and that all these bodies had been created by the Pope, by bull, dispensation, or charter, about the close of the 12th or the commencement of the 13th century. This statement of the existence of a Papal bull bestowing privileges on the Freemasons has been repeatedly made since the date of Governor Pownall's article by other writers who probably borrowed his authority for the claim.

We think that it will be admitted that the Freemasons, who were at first officials of the Church, and whose schools of architecture were originally established in the abbeys, were under the protection and patronage of the Church. But that any especial bull in their favor was ever issued, though not at all improbable, has never yet been established as a historical fact.

Governor Pownall, anxious to prove the truth of his statement, caused application to be made to the Librarian of the Vatican, and the Pope himself is said to have ordered a minute search to be made. The search was in vain. The official report says, "Not the least trace of any such documents could be found." Pownall, however, believed that some record of this charter or



¹ "Manual of Gothic Architecture," p. 76.

² Published in the "Archæologia," vol. ix, pp. 110-126.

diploma must be somewhere buried at Rome amid forgotten bundles or rolls of manuscripts—a circumstance that he says had frequently occurred in relation to important English documents.

Unfortunately, therefore, for the settlement of the historic question, it by no means follows, because the Roman Catholic Librarian of the Vatican could not find a bull granting special favors to an association which the Popes had at a later period denounced, that no such document is in existence. Besides the too common result of an unsuccessful search for old manuscripts which continually occur to investigators, we have in this case the other factor to meet, the policy of the Roman Catholic Church. That policy always overrules all principles of historic accuracy. Hence in subjects over which that Church has control, suppressed documents are not rare.

This question of a Papal charter, therefore, remains unanswered. Krause, for instance, on the supposed authority of a statement of Ashmole communicated by Dr. Knipe to the author of the life of that antiquary, admits the fact of Papal indulgences, while Stieglitz, accepting the unsuccessful research of Pownall as proof, urges the absurdity of any such claim.

Whether there is or is not in existence such a charter, diploma, or bull, it is very evident from history that the Freemasons of the Middle Ages first enjoyed the protection and afterward the patronage of the Church extended to them by those in authority.

Ruskin, in the Seven Lamps of Architecture, defines "Architecture is the art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man. . . . that the sight of them contributes to his mental health, power and pleasure." We see in these magnificent Gothic buildings the image in stone of Masonic philosophy. Pencil and chisel have designed and cut a permanent record of the devout prayer and praise of the Craftsmen. For all time we have set forth in these stately structures the sublime standards of our forefather Freemasons.



CHAPTER SIXTY-SEVEN

TWO CLASSES OF WORKMEN, OR THE FREEMASONS AND THE ROUGH MASONS



HE art of building in the Middle Ages is presented to us by authentic history as being practiced by two distinct classes of workmen: first, the association of builders who have already been repeatedly described under the name of "Freemasons"; and, secondly, another class of workmen who were not members of

the Fraternity, though they were often in the cities entitled by charter to work as independent bodies.

Thus we find that in London in the 14th century, during the reign of Edward III., there was an incorporated Company of Masons who sent four delegates to the Common Council, and a Company of Freemasons, which being a smaller and probably a more select body, sent only two.¹

The Strasburg Constitutions forbid those admitted as members of the Fraternity of Freemasons from working with any other Craftsmen.² Evidently this refers to other Masons whether incorporated or not, and who had not been made free of the Gild or Fraternity.

The old English Charges furnish evidence that the same distinction of workmen existed in England as in Germany. For instance, the "Mason Allowed," that is, he who had been accepted by the Fraternity, is forbidden to instruct the "Layer," by furnishing him with moulds or patterns for work. "Also," says the York manuscript, "that no Master or Fellow make any mould. rule, or square of any layer nor set any layer (within the Lodge) or without to hew any mould stones."

The date of the York manuscript is about the close of the 16th century. But the same regulation is found in all the later manu-

¹ Herbert, "History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies," vol. i, p. 34.

² "Strasburg Ordinances," No. 2, thus interpreted by Krause.

scripts. In the Lansdowne manuscript, however, as well as in the Antiquity manuscript, which appears to be only a copy of the Lansdowne, the word is *Lowen*. This is evidently the blunder of a careless or an ignorant copyist, who has retained the initial letter, because in it there could have been no chance of confounding it for C, but has changed the rest of the word *layer*, badly written most probably in the exemplar from which he copied, into *Lowen*.

The correct word is layer. From this Regulation we learn that the division of the builders in the Middle Ages was into two classes: a superior one always named in the English manuscript Constitutions and Charges as Masons, and an inferior class called layers, and sometimes, as in the Alnwick manuscript, rough layers. In works of the same period, not Masonic Constitutions, we also find the distinction of Free Mason and Rough Mason, being no doubt the same thing as a Stone Layer is different to a Brick Layer, a Craft which belonged no more than the carpenters' to the great body of Freemasons.¹

Now what is the meaning of this word layer, which is to be classed among "the lost beauties of the English language," being retained only in the compound word bricklayer?

There can be no difficulty in answering this question. The *Promptorium Parvulorum*, the oldest Latin-English dictionary, was compiled about 1440 by Geoffrey, a Dominican Friar of Norfolk, England, and the latest edition published in 1865 by the Camden Society, with notes by Albert Way, has the following:

"Leyare, or werkare wythe stone and mortere." The Latin word given for it is Cæmentarius.

In classical Latin, as well as in the Low Latin of the Middle Ages, a camentarius was a builder of walls, who handled the camenta or rough stones as they came from the quarries. St. Jerome, in one of his Epistles (53), defines a camentarius as one who builds rough walls of camenta, or unhewn stones. A layer or stonelayer (the word "stone" being understood), which the Promptorium Latinizes by camentarius, was a rough mason whose business was simply to follow the plan of the architect, and in the

¹ A work published in 1559, "The Booke for a Justice of the Peace," has the following passage: "None artificer, nor labourer hereafter named, take no more nor greater wages than hereafter is limited . . . that is to say, a free mason, master carpenter, rough mason, bricklayer," etc., fol. 17.



erection of the walls of an edifice to lay one stone upon another, just as the bricklayer does at the present day with bricks.

Way has this interesting note on the word Leyare and its definition in the Promptorium Parvulorum:

"In the account of works at the palace of Westminster and Tower during the 14th century, preserved among the miscellaneous records of the Queen's Remembrancer, mention is made continually of cubatores, or stone layers. See also the abstract of accounts relating to the erection of St. Stephen's Chapel in the reign of Edward III., printed in Smith's Antiquities of Westminster. In this contract for building Fotheringhay Church, the chief mason undertakes neither to 'set more nor fewer freemasons, rogh setters ne leye(r)s' upon the work but as the appointed overseer shall ordain."

The same distinction between the two classes appears in a statute passed in the reign of Edward VI., 1548. It is then enacted "that noe person or persons shall at anye tyme after the firste daye of Aprille next comynge, interrupte, denye, lett or disturbe any Freemason, rough mason, carpenter, bricklayer, playsterer," etc.²

The names of rough masons, rough setters, or rough layers bestowed upon these workmen of an inferior class were taken from the German. In the Strasburg Ordinances ruh or roh is applied to a raw or ignorant Apprentice. In the German rituals Rohen Stein is the rough ashlar. Richardson defines the word "rough" as meaning "coarse, unpolished, savage, rude, uncivil." When the English Charges speak of a "Rough Mason," they mean one whose work is coarse and unpolished, and who has not the skill in stonecutting possessed by the members of the Fraternity of Freemasons.

To the Freemasons, a brotherhood devoted to the erection principally of religious edifices, every other Mason was viewed with reserve, almost contempt, as rude and ignorant; he was called a Rough Mason, and they refused to work with him or to impart to him any information which would assist him in his own work.



¹ To make "cubator" signify a man who lays stone, a layer, because a poet in the iron age of the Latin language, Plotinus, of Nola, had used the same word to mean a man who lies down is not in the best taste.

² "Statutes of the Realm," vol. iv, p. 59.

The higher class, called by historians the "Freemasons," in the English Constitutions are known as "Masons." But in other documents of the Middle Ages we frequently meet with the word "Freemason," used in a sense evidently meaning a particular class of artisans.

As early as the year 1350, in the reign of Edward III. of England, an act of Parliament was passed in which the wages of a Master Freemason 1 are fixed at 4 pence and that of other Masons at 3 pence. This word was used later in other statutes, in monumental inscriptions, and in old records, and always so as to indicate that the Freemason was of a class differing from other Masons.

Whence then comes the term, from what is it derived, and what was in former times its exact meaning? These are questions that have greatly exercised the minds of Masonic students who have arrived at three very different conclusions.

The first of these conclusions, namely, that "free" in the word Freemason was originally *Frère* or Brother, added by the workmen who used the French language to the word Mason so as to make the term *Frère* Mason or Brother Mason, which was afterwards Englished into Free Mason, is mere fancy, hardly worth serious answer.

Paley says, quite dogmatically: "The name Freemasons is a corruption of *Frères Maçons*, or Fraternity," and he quotes Dallaway as his authority for the opinion.²

But Dallaway, in his Historical Account of Master and Freemason, has expressed an opposite opinion. He admits that a passage in the Leland manuscript supports a belief that the name of Freemasons in England was merely a corruption of Frère Maçons, but immediately afterwards he says, "but I am not borne out by their appelations on the continent," and he gives their titles such as Franc-Maçon in French, Frei Maurer in German, and Libero Muratore in Italian.³ None of these titles could of course have been translations of Frère, but must have been in-



¹ Brother Mackey had in mind Act 25, Edw. III., st. ii, c. 3, A. D. 1850, which refers to "Mestre Mason de franche peer," or "Master Mason of Free Stone." Probably the earliest use of the word "Freemasons" is found applied to the nineteenth on the list now in the Guildhall Records at London, England, of the Companies entitled to send representatives to the City Council, and dated August, 1876.

[&]quot; "Manual of Gothic Architecture," p. 211.

³ Dallaway, "Master and Freemason," p. 434.

tended to convey in each of these languages the idea given in English by the word Free.

It is strange, too, that Dallaway should have laid any stress on the Leland manuscript as favoring even a guess (admitted afterwards to be unlikely) that Freemason was originally Frère Maçon.

Now the word Frère Maçon does not occur in the Leland manuscript. Only once do we meet with frères, in its usual sense of brothers or members of a confrerie or confraternity, a sense in which it is still employed. The word always used is Masons, or rather Maconnes and Maconrye. There is no mention of either Freemasons or Frère Maçons, and nothing can be learned from the manuscript of the source or original meaning of the word Free.

But in fact the Leland manuscript has been very generally admitted to be of doubtful value as a historical document. Purporting to have been written in the reign of Henry VI., and by the king himself, it has been a shining mark for the critics. The subject has been already discussed by us in brief and we need but say here that the importance of the matter in the minds of many students including Bros. George F. Moore and Robert F. Gould deserves renewed research and a thorough sifting of all available evidence.

We may dismiss the attempt to trace Free from $Fr \center{e}re$, as one of those illfounded ideas to which rash students are sometimes led.

Again, it has been supposed that Freemasons were so called because they worked in Freestone, and because they were thus distinguished from other Masons, who were called Rough Masons, because they worked in rough stones. But for several reasons this conclusion is open to attack, although it is not as objectionable as the preceding one.

In the first place, if the name of the class was derived from the character of the stone worked, the proper words would be Free Stone Mason and Rough Stone Mason, not Free Mason and Rough Mason.

We may well note also that Free Stone is not the opposite or antithesis of Rough Stone. There is no relation, contradictory or otherwise, between them.

Free Stone is any stone composed of sand or grit, which, on account of its softness, is easily cut or wrought.



Rough Stone is any stone, no matter what may be its geological character, that is still in its native state, and has not been formed or polished by the hands of the workmen. A stone may be at the same time free stone and rough stone. The word ruh or roh— English rough—raw—is used in the German Constitutions to signify unskilled or unpolished. An Apprentice is spoken of in them as being taken "from his rough state" (von Ruhem auff), which Krause interprets as "one still wholly ignorant." And so, also, the unpolished stone which we call the rough Ashlar, the German rituals name Rohen Stein.

By a "Rough Mason" or a "Rough Layer," the old English Freemasons meant a Mason who had not been thoroughly educated in the art, one who was ignorant of the principles and geometrical secrets possessed by the higher Fraternity.

That tracing of the words is therefore not well founded which would derive the two titles Free Mason and Rough Mason from the technical nature of the stones on which both classes worked. The Rough Mason may have often used free stone in building his walls, but he did not thereby become a Free Mason.

It must be observed that the word Free Mason is never employed in the English, German, or French Constitutions or Regulations of the Craft. There the simple word Mason or its equivalent is used. The complete name is to be found only in statutes and contracts.

But we are not required to suppose that the framers of these documents were acquainted with the fact that there was a distinction between the two classes founded on the possession of certain secrets. They simply intended, by the words "Free Mason" and "Rough Mason," to recognize that there were two classes of workmen, one of superior skill and higher station to the other.

But though the word "Free Mason" is not to be found in the Masonic Constitutions, it is evident that the builders themselves had recognized it as a distinguishing title as early as the 14th century. This is seen to be true because in the year 1377 we meet with the Company of Freemasons and the Company of Masons in the list of those which were authorized to send delegates to the Common Council of London.²



¹ Krause, "Kunsturkunden," ii, 284.

² Herbert, "History of Livery Companies," i, 34.

Evidently the word "Free" was employed, no matter what was its original meaning, to mean a superior class. We believe it may justly be considered as referring to the fact that the persons called "Freemasons" were men of superior abilities, who, by being accepted into the Fraternity, had become free of the Gild or corporation. Masons who were not possessed of this amount of skill, and who were employed in labors of a less artistic character, were not permitted to work with these Freemasons—were not accepted into their Fraternity; in other words, were not made free of the Gild.

A writer in the London Freemason says: "Originally the Operative Mason was free of his Gild, and probably we have in the word a remembrance of emancipation through honest labor in towns of those who were originally villani adscripti gleba"—serfs who were attached to the soil, and who could not be admitted to the freedom of the Gild because the lord who owned them might at any time reclaim them.

In the earliest periods of the feudal system, before the municipalities began to assert their rights, the handicrafts were for the most part practiced by slaves. At a later period freemen also practiced the trades, but there was always a distinction between the free and the servile Craftsman—a distinction which the Freemasons apparently retained after the cause had ceased. Krause says that these Freemasons were called Free because they possessed certain town and city liberties. These privileges, according to Hope, Pownall, and many other writers, consisted in the sole right of building churches, cathedrals, and other religious edifices, and in certain charters granted them by Popes and Kings.

Dallaway, it is true, denies, at least so far as England is concerned, that any such privileges existed. "No proof," he says, "has been as yet adduced from any chronicle or history of this country that as a Fraternity or Gild the Freemasons in England possessed or held by patent any exclusive privilege whatever." ²

But if there is no positive testimony to be found on record of patents or charters granting such privileges, there is the whole course of history, the words of contracts between the Craftsmen

¹ Krause, "Kunsturkunden," i, p. 74.

² "Master and Freemasons," p. 425.



and their employers, the distinction made between the Freemasons and the Rough Masons in the matter of wages and many other incidental circumstances. These references clearly show that the Freemasons were looked upon as a superior class, and were in possession of certain privileges, social as well as professional, which were denied to the lower order of workmen.

A proof of the rank and estimation which Master Masons, Architects, or Freemasons held in society during the Middle Ages is to be found in the contract made in the year 1439 between the Abbot of St. Edmundsbury and John Wood, "Masoun," for the repairs and restoration of the great towers "in all manner of things that longe to Freemasonry."

In this contract, Wood, the Master Mason, is allowed "borde for himself as a gentilman and his servant as a yeoman, and thereto two robys, one for himselfe after a gentilman's livery." 1

Though in the English Constitutions we do not meet, as we have already said, with the word "Freemason," yet its equivalent is found in the constant use of the phrase "Mason Allowed" to mean one who had become a member of the Fraternity; that is, who had been made "Free of the Gild." But we have heretofore shown that the meaning of "allowed" is "accepted," and therefore a Freemason was a Mason who had been accepted into the Fraternity.

The founders of Speculative Freemasonry, who in the year 1717 withdrew from the Operative branch of the institution and formed the Grand Lodge of England, seemed to be aware of this importance of the word "Free," as meaning one who had been "allowed" or "accepted" into the Fraternity, for they assumed for themselves the title of "Free and Accepted Masons." In this way they claimed that they were Freemasons Accepted into the Fraternity. "Free and Accepted Masons" now denoted Speculative Freemasons, and thus they distinguished themselves from Operative Craftsmen.

Just in the same way, when they were all Operatives, the higher class were called "Freemasons" to distinguish themselves from the lower class, who were known as "Rough Masons."

Toward a perfect understanding of the true organization of the mediæval Freemasons, it is not really necessary that we should

1 "Anthologia," vol. xxiii, p. 331.



know the correct source of the word Free. It is not material to this purpose that we know whether it comes from the French frère, and consequently that the word "Freemason" signifies a Brother Mason; or from freestone, and that it means a Mason who works on that material; or lastly, that it is derived from freeman and denotes one who had been made Free of the Fraternity.

All that is really material to be known on this subject is that there was always a division of the mediæval builders into two classes, distinctly separate the one from the other; and that the Freemasons occupied the superior place, superior in skill, superior in the possession of certain privileges, and therefore superior in social standing.

There are, however, two points worthy of notice in connection with this understanding of the subject.

In the first place, the word "Freemason" was confined as a descriptive term to the workmen of England. Neither this nor any equivalent of it is to be found in the Masonic documents of France or Germany. The words Franc-Maçon and Frei Maurer, now so common in these languages, were not known until after the organization of Speculative Freemasonry in England and its spread in those countries by the "Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons," established in 1717 in London.

The words Franc-Maçon and Frei Maurer were never applied in any document, Masonic or non-Masonic, to any of the builders of the Middle Ages in France or Germany, as Freemason was in England.

The growth of those words in those languages appears to have been in this way. There were in England, as early as the 14th century, a class of skillful builders who excluded from their companionship all other builders whose standard of knowledge and skill was lower than theirs.

This exclusive and more skillful class were recognized in the statutes of the kingdom, in contracts made with them, in tomb inscriptions, in church registers, and in some other documents by the title of "Freemasons."



¹ Thus in the church register of the parish of Astbury are the following entries:

[&]quot;1685. Smallwod, Jos. fils Jos. Henshaw Freemason bapt. 3 die Nov.

[&]quot;1697. Jos. fils Jos. Henshaw, Freemason, buried 7 April."

During the 17th century at least, if not before, the word began to be used by the Freemasons themselves as a distinct name for the brethren of the Fraternity. Thus in 1646 Ashmole wrote that he had been "made a Freemason at Warrington," and he calls those who had been just received into the Fraternity, "new Accepted Masons."

In 1717, when the Speculative institution was established, the founders adopted both the words "Free" and "Accepted," and called themselves "Free and Accepted Masons." In the "Charges of a Free-Mason," published in 1723 in the first edition of the Constitutions, the word "Freemason" is adopted as the recognized title of the members of the Fraternity, being there adopted in place of the simple word "Mason," which was used in all the Old Charges. Thus the Old Charge which forbids "Masons to work within or without the Lodge with Rough Layers," reads in the Book of Constitutions of 1723 that "Freemasons shall not work with those that are not Free."

The title "Freemason" afterwards came quite commonly into use. In 1734 a book was published called the "Free Masons' Vade Mecum," and the term is several times employed in Masonic publications of that period. "Free and Accepted Masons" and "Freemasons" were then, as it appears from the prints of that day, terms adopted and in common use immediately after what has been called the Revival, in the beginning of the 18th century.

Now, brethren began to be "sent beyond sea" to establish Lodges in foreign countries — beginning with the Deputation granted in 1728 by the Earl of Inchiquin, Grand Master, "to some Brothers in Spain to constitute a Lodge at Gibraltar," succeeded very rapidly by others in Germany, Holland, France, and other countries. Then the title of "Freemasons," which had been adopted by the Speculative Freemasons of England to distinguish themselves from the purely Operative Freemasons, from whom they had separated, was carried into these foreign countries by those who had been appointed under the various charters to spread the system abroad.

Necessarily, the English word was in each of these countries translated by those who entered the Order into an equivalent word in their own language.

¹ Ashmole's "Diary," October 16, 1646, and March 11, 1682.



So "Freemason" became in Germany "Freimaurer," in France "Franc-Maçon," in Italy "Libero Muratore," and so on. In all of these expressions it will be seen that the expression "Free" has been translated by a word that has no relation either to frère, brother, or to freestone.

Freimaurer, in German, and Franc-Maçon, in French, like Freemason in English, conveys the idea of a freeman, who is a Craftsman worker in stone; originally indicating a Freeman of the Gild, and afterwards, and now, a man of a superior class.

For example, in the 17th century a Freemason was a cultured Mason of great skill, engaged in the designing and erecting of cathedrals, as distinguished from the common workman, who only built walls and laid or set stones.

In the 18th century a Freemason was a Speculative Craftsman, engaged in the erection of a spiritual temple, as distinguished from the purely Operative workmen, who labored without symbolism or philosophy at the construction of material edifices.

This very distinction into two classes was still more plainly marked in the mediæval Freemasonry of Germany.

If, for instance, we refer to the Strasburg Ordinances, we find a very distinct reference to two classes of Freemasons under various names.

The Fraternity of Freemasons who were united together for the construction of cathedrals and other religious and important edifices, was called the Craft of Stonework. Each member of this body is named in the ordinances either a Meister, Master, a Gesell, Companion or Fellow, or a Werkmann, Workman, or, as it has been generally translated, a Craftsman. The word Maurer (in the old German, Murer) is the name given to those Masons of the lower class who in the English Constitutions are designated as Rough Layers. They were permitted to work only on inferior tasks, in cases of necessity.

Thus one of the ordinances of Strasburg provides as follows: If there be a need of Masons (*Murer*) to hew or set stone, the Master may employ them, so that the employers' work may not



¹ Das Handwerk von Steinwerk. "Strasburg Ordinances."

² In that old English dictionary of the 15th century, the "Promptorium Pavulorum," Masone is defined to be a werkemann with the Latin equivalent lathomus.

be hindered, and the men so employed shall not be subject, except with their own free will, to the regulations of the Craft.¹

But the exclusive position maintained by this higher class is distinctly expressed in the second item of the Strasburg Constitutions in the following words:

"Whosoever wishes to be received into this Fraternity as a member, according to these regulations as they are written in this book, must promise to keep all the points and articles of our Craft of Stonework, which consists only of Masters (Meyster) who are skilled in constructing costly buildings and works which they have been made free 2 (have the privilege to erect). They shall not work with the men of any other Craft."

The distinction between the Werkmann, or Freemason, and the Murer (Maurer), or Wall Builder, is expressly made in one of the Strasburg regulations which relates to Apprentices. It is there said that "If any one who has served with a Murer comes to a Werkmann to learn of him, the Werkmann can not receive him as an Apprentice unless he consent to serve for three years."

But the Freemasons of Germany had another and a still more significant method of distinguishing themselves from the lower class of rough workmen; while these latter were known as *Maurer*, literally wall builders (for the German for wall is *Mauer*), the higher class, the Freemasons, the men who invented and practiced Gothic architecture, called themselves *Steinmetzen*.

Now, in German the verb metzen signifies to cut with a knife, a chisel, or any other cutting instrument.

A Steinmetz is, therefore, a Stonecutter — one who with the chisel cuts the stone into various forms or decorates it with objects in relief. On the other hand, a Maurer is a builder of walls — a mason laborer who roughly sets or lays one stone upon another, without any reference to beauty of design or skill of art.

The Steinmetz, or Stonecutter, was the Freemason; the Maurer, or wall builder, was the Rough Mason or Rough Layer.



¹ Wer es auch das man der Murer, es were Stein zu bauwen oder zu muren . . . die mag ein Meister wol furdern, u. s. w. "Strasburg Ordinances," No. 8.

² Uffgefreyget, befreiheitel, made free, that is, as Krause interprets it, authorized and privileged to do these things; and such, we believe, is the true meaning of the word free in the word Freemason.

³ Thus a knife is Messer, a chisel Meissel, and a butcher, one who cuts flesh. a Metzger.

The adoption of this word Steinmetzen, or Stonecutters, by the Freemasons who invented Gothic architecture in the Middle Ages throws a flood of light upon the history of Freemasonry at that period.

A Master Stonecutter was an honorable term, and whoever wished to become an architect had to begin his course of instruction by learning to cut stone.¹

The cutting of stone ornaments was not used before the 12th century. In the early Norman work, says Parker, the chisel was very little employed. Most of the ornaments in the churches anterior to that period are such as could have been readily wrought by the axe, and could have been readily produced by stone hewers. Whatever sculpture there is appears to have been executed afterward, for it was a general practice to execute such carved work after the stones were placed in position.²

We do not find that the chisel was used, as it must have been if there had been any occasion for deep cutting, and especially under-cutting, in any buildings of ascertained date before the year 1120.³ Carving in stone occurred in Italy and the south of France at an earlier period; later in northern France and Germany, and still later in England.

This gradual spreading out to the north of the art of stonecutting — the Freemasons' art — confirms the theory maintained by Hope and other writers, that the Freemasonry of the Middle Ages arose in Lombardy and traveled thence over the rest of Europe.

The monk Gervase, in his description of the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Canterbury, tells us that in the old work there was no deep sculpture with the chisel. He says that in the old Cathedral, "the arches and everything else were plain or sculptured with an axe and not with a chisel."

But when with their geometrical system of building the Freemasons had introduced the art of deep stonecutting with the chisel, they revelled in the art and the free use of sculptured



¹ Boisserée, "Histoire de la Cathédrale de la Cologne," p. 14.

² John Henry Parker, Introduction to the "Study of Gothic Architecture," p. 41.

³ See the above work, p. 66.

⁴ The work of the monk Gervasius Dorobornensis, or Gervase of Canterbury, is contained in the collection of the "Decem Scriptores Anglise."

ornaments; most of them having a symbolic meaning, became wonderful in the churches and cathedrals which they erected.

Rightly, therefore, did the Freemasons of Germany, the builders of the great Cathedrals of Magdeburg, of Cologne, and of Strasburg assume the title of Stonecutters, and held themselves above the mere wall builders, who only hewed stone.

The Steinmetz, or Stonecutter, in Germany, like the Craftsman or the Freemason of England, was of a higher class than the Maurer or builder of walls, the Rough Mason or the Rough Layer.

We regret that the very early record of the initiation of Brother Moray does not throw light on the use of the word *Freemason*. Robert Moray's initiation is discussed by Bro. Dudley Wright in the *Builder*, July, 1921, page 185, the record being "At Neucastell (England) the 20 day off May, 1641. The quilk day ane serten nomber off Mester and others being lafule conveined, doeth admit Mr the Right Honerabell Mr Robert Moray, General quarter Mr to the Armie of Scotlan, and the same bing aproven be the hell Mester off the Mesone of the Log off Edenroth, quherto they heave set to ther handes or markes."

Moray is on record as having visited the Lodge of Edinburgh on July 27, 1647. In his correspondence he made frequent use of his Masonic Mark, a five-pointed star. He was president of the Royal Society, a mystic, and died on July 4, 1673. See also the "Lauderdale Papers."



CHAPTER SIXTY-EIGHT

MASONS' AND FREEMASONS' MARKS



HE subject of Marks forms an interesting episode in the history of Freemasonry, both Operative and Speculative. The Mark of a Mason or Freemason is a letter, a symbol, or some other arbitrary or chosen figure chiseled by a Craftsman on the surface of a stone for the purpose of identifying his own work, dis-

tinguishing it from that of other workmen, and sometimes the mark is also used by way of directing how and where the stone is to be placed.¹

George Godwin, in an article "On Masons' Marks Observable on Buildings of the Middle Ages," has given, perhaps, the best definition of these figures.

He says that it can perhaps hardly be doubted that these marks "were made chiefly to distinguish the work of different individuals. At the present time the man who works a stone (being different from the man who sets it) makes his mark on the bed or other internal face of it so that it may be identified. The fact, however, that in the ancient buildings it is only a certain number of stones which bear symbols—that marks found in different countries (although the variety is great) are in many cases identical, and in all have a singular accordance in character—seems to show that the men who employed them did so by system, and that the system, if not the same in England, Germany, and France, was closely analogous in one country to that of the others." Godwin adds that many of these signs are evidently religious and symbolical, "and agree fully with our notions of the body of men known as the Freemasons." ²

¹ The student can read to very great advantage "A Treatise on the Selection and Registration of Marks, with Traditions, Customs and Laws Relating to the Mark Master Mason Degree," Charles A. Conover, Coldwater, Michigan, 1920.

² See Godwin's letters to Ellis in the "Archæologia," vol. xxx.

That there should be a purpose of identification so that the particular work of every Freemason might, by a simple inspection, be recognized by his Fellows and the Lord or Master of the Works might be able to credit any defect or any excellence to its proper source, was really the necessary feature to be shown clearly by a Masonic Mark.

By observing this distinction we avoid the error committed by several writers of calling every device found upon a stone a mark and thereby giving to the system of marks a greater antiquity than really belongs to it.

Thus it has been said by one writer that "Masonic Marks have been discovered on the Pyramids of Egypt, on the ruined buildings in Herculaneum, Pompeii, Greece, and Rome, and on the ancient cathedrals, castles, etc., that are to be found in almost every country of Europe." 1

But the fact is that the inscriptions and devices found on stones in buildings of antiquity were most probably relating to myths, or symbols, or history, being a brief record or allusion to an important event deserving such notice. If any of them were proprietary—that is, intended to identify the work or the ownership of some particular person—there is no evidence of it or that any well-organized system of ownership marks existed in that very early period.

Lord Lindsay, in his Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land, inserts a description of a square building or monumental chamber, near Baalbeck, given to him by Farren, the Consul-General in Syria, which was covered with small marks. On this subject Farren makes the following comments:

"It is very remarkable that the faces of this monument are covered with small marks cut on the stones—hieroglyphics I can not call them—they are too numerous to be accidental. I was convinced that they were not from the mere process of chiseling."²

On this statement, Godwin remarks: "Whether or not they were analogous to the marks under consideration (Freemasons' Marks) I do not pretend to say." 3



¹ Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," chap. ix, p. 67.

² Lord Lindsay, "Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land," vol. ii, p. 361.

³ Two letters to Mr. Ellis on Masonic Marks, by George Godwin, in the "Archeologia," vol. xxx, p. 120.

The fact that countless buildings of the ancient East have been found covered with devices and hieroglyphics which the comparatively recent labors of learned scholars and antiquaries have deciphered and shown to be mythological or symbolical, and very often historical, would lead us to infer that those on the monument near Baalbeck were of the same kind.

The carvings on the Pyramids, which Lyon refers to as "Masonic Marks," are really for the most part inscriptions.

Thus Ainsworth tells us that in the ruins of Al-Hadhr, in Mesopotamia, "Every stone, not only in the chief building, but in the walls and bastions and other public monuments when not defaced by time, is marked with a character, which is for the most part either a Chaldean letter or numeral. Some of the letters resemble the Roman A, and others were apparently astronomical signs, among which the ancient mirror and handle ? were very common." 1

Ainsworth's description is too limited to supply the foundation for a weighty theory, but we are hardly warranted in ascribing to the Chaldean letters and astronomical signs the character of proprietary or personal ownership marks, such as those practiced by the Freemasons of the Middle Ages.

The cuttings on the Pyramids which Lyon refers to as "Masonic Marks," are, as we have reason for believing, inscriptions, mostly in the cursive or writing style and generally recording the names of the various kings in whose reigns they were constructed.

Again, the Messrs. Waller, in a work on Monumental Brasses,² describe a monument to Sir John de Creke and Lady Alyne, his wife, at Wesley Waterless, in Cambridgeshire, about 1325, which is inscribed with a monogram or device consisting of the letter N, with a halfmoon on one side, and a star, or more probably the sun, on the other, and a mallet above. This is supposed to have been the device of the artist. But the same is found on a seal attached to a deed dated 1272, wherein Walter Dixi, called Camentarius de Bernewelle, conveys certain lands to his son Lawrence. The seal has for its legend or inscription the words, S. Walter: Le: Massune.



¹ William Francis Ainsworth's "Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea, and Armenia," vol. ii, p. 167.

² "A Series of Monumental Brasses from the 13th to the 16th Century," by J. G. and L. A. B. Waller.

Messrs. Waller think that the occurrence of a similar device in two instances seems to show that it was not an individual mark, but that it may have been the badge of some Gild of Freemasons. On the contrary, the use of it as a seal on a deed of conveyance proves that it was a family device. It is probable that the monumental brass referred to above was the work of the son or grandson of the *Cæmentarius* or Freemason who conveyed the land fifty-three years before, and whose family seal as well as his profession was adopted by his descendant.

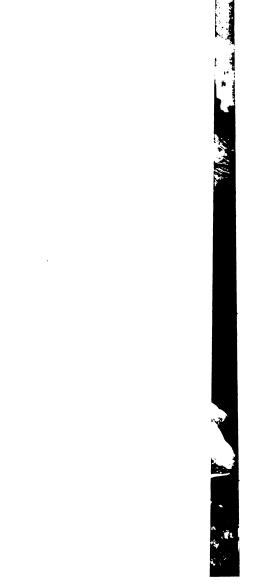
Godwin gives from the Gloucester Cathedral a mark or device in the form of a seal, consisting of a mallet placed between a half moon and a sun. This will give some show of probability to the theory that this device was the badge of some early Masonic Gild. But the use of the letter would also tend to show that Walter Dixi had adopted the Gild device with the addition of the letter, to form his own private seal, and that this combination he also used as his mark.

If this be so, then this would be a very early specimen of a proprietary mark. While, however, it presents the characteristic of a mark used to designate the personality of a workman who constructed the brass, it differs in its complicated form from the more simple marks used by the mediæval Freemasons. The Messrs. Waller, whose theory was that it was the badge of a Gild of Freemasons, say that this will suggest "that the same minds that designed the architectural structures of the Middle Ages also designed the sepulchral monuments."

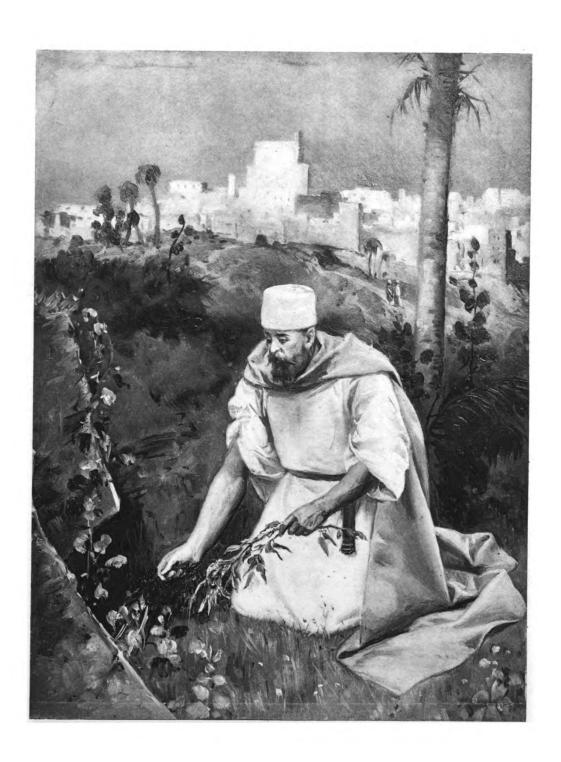
Without accepting the truth of the premises, though we must admit the probability of the claim, there can be no doubt of the correctness of the conclusion. The same artistic skill and taste that were displayed in the exterior construction of churches and cathedrals were also employed in their interior decorations, sepulchral and otherwise, and the same class of artists were engaged in both tasks.

If the profession and the "seal of Walter the Mason" were retained, as we may well suppose, by his descendant, then we have the very best evidence that the sepulchral brass of Sir John de Creke and his wife were designed and constructed by a Freemason, who used his family seal as his proprietary mark.





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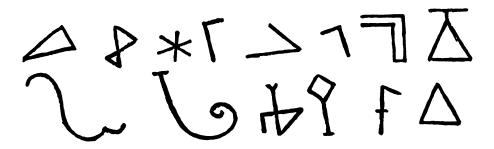
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Lyon gives, from the Minute Book of the Lodge of Edinburgh—and Godwin, from personal observation of stones in the churches of England and the Continent of Europe also shows—many marks consisting only of letters, single and double, of which the following are specimens:

NCME AW MHHTW HTAP

Besides this class of what may be called literal marks, being evidently the initials of the names of the workmen who inscribed them, there was a second class of marks which were geometrical, consisting of angles, curves, circles, and other mathematical figures. These were far more common than the literal class of marks, and have been found in great variety. The following are a few specimens taken from English, Scottish, and Continental churches:



The great frequency of these marks, made up of mathematical lines, is a strong proof of the truth of the opinion held by Paley, Lindsay, and many other writers, that the secret of the mediæval Freemasons was the application of the principles of geometry to the art of building. This secret, the magnificent results of which are shown in the great Cathedrals and other glorious edifices erected during the Middle Ages in the Gothic style, has been lost to the professional or Operative Freemasons of the present day. But its influence is still felt by the Speculative Freemasons, who succeeded the Operative Lodges as organized bodies, and who, when they abandoned the Operative Art, or rather changed it over into a Science, still retained, so far as they possibly could, the relics of the older institution.

Hence we find these Speculative, or, as they called themselves, "Free and Accepted Masons," made "right angles, horizontals, and perpendiculars" the basis of all their manual modes of recognition, and declared that "Geometry was the foundation of Freemasonry."

A third class of marks may be set down as the symbolical. Here we are inclined to dissent from the views of Bro. Lyon. Our good brother says that "There is no ground for believing that in the choice of their marks the 16th-century Masons were guided by any consideration of their symbolical quality or of their relation to the propositions of Euclid."

Probably Bro. Lyon was governed more in what he said by the consideration that the Rough Masons would not be likely to use anything of a geometrical meaning but to believe that Freemasons would be in the same class is far from being so well founded.

Symbolism, as a means of giving a language and a spiritual meaning to their labor, was a science thoroughly understood and practiced by the Freemasons who invented the Gothic style. Findel says that they even symbolized their working tools, a custom in which they have been closely imitated by their Speculative successors.

The symbolism of the Gothic architects has already been sufficiently discussed in a previous chapter. We find it is now necessary to advert to it only in reference to the fact that the

1 "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 68.



However, we must not confound the more elaborate decorations used as symbols on the exterior and in the interior of churches, such as gargoyles, rose windows, cathedral wheels, etc., with the simpler forms of some of these symbols which were adopted by the builders as proprietary marks.

As these symbolic marks presupposed that those who adopted them to designate their work must have understood their meaning, it would not be a very bold assumption to believe that the use of them for that purpose was confined to the more intellectual portion of the workmen. The adoption of a symbol for a mark would in general indicate that the person who adopted it was one who had extended his studies to the highest principles of his art and had made himself familiar with the science and the artistic philosophy of symbolism.

If this reasoning is accepted, we shall then recognize another class somewhat lower in culture than the former and probably less familiar with the occult elements of their profession, though perhaps equally skillful in all its practical operations. Being therefore familiar with the method of applying geometry to the art of building, these workmen would be likely to select such signs as are suggestive of mathematical figures for marks.

Pursuing the same path of reasoning we would find a third and still lower group, far inferior to either of the two preceding classes in intellectual culture and having sluggish minds wholly uninspired by anything that was not purely practical in their profession. They would be compelled, by the regulations of the Gild or as they were guided by their own inclination, to distinguish the stones which they had wrought from those of other workmen. We might therefore suppose that they would be content to gain that object by using the simplest method that could present itself, which, of course, would be to take as a mark the initial letter of their names.

If we accept this theory, we would thus have an easy method of detecting some most interesting information when we inspect the stones of a mediæval edifice constructed by the old Gothic Freemasons. We should find in that way not only the practical



skill in architecture of the builders whose works have been individualized by their proprietary marks, but also the intellectual cultivation of each workman. This one we might say was high in art, for he had cultivated the symbolism which was its highest development. Another one had not aspired so high, but had confined himself to a geometric formula. But this one was low in intellectual training, with little if any identity or imagination, for he had contented himself with no more ingenious device to identify his labor than the simple use of a letter of his name.

We confess that the acceptance of such a theory as this would very readily relieve the antiquary from all the embarrassments which he so often encounters. Especially is this the case in the attempt to explain the reason of this diversity in the character of the Masonic marks of the Middle Ages, and would enable him to explain why they are not all of one kind — not all alphabetical, monogrammatic, or all geometrical, or all symbolic.

Unfortunately, however, for the easy solution of the problem, another theory has been proposed by M. Didron. To this further reference will be directly made. The Didron theory, as we may call it, credits the initial letter marks to the higher class of workmen or overseers, and the symbolic and mathematical to the inferior class of workmen.

This theory has some weight, because it is based upon the well-known fact that in the Middle Ages the art of writing was not so generally diffused as it is now. Many persons of high station were unable to sign their names. There are instances where kings have affixed the sign of the cross to charters, assigning as a reason "pro ignorantia literarum," that is to say, in consequence of their ignorance of writing.

Now, it is not to be supposed that the lower order of Freemasons were any better instructed. As the use of initials would indicate a knowledge of letters, it may be inferred that only the more educated members of the Fraternity used this method of making their proprietary mark, while crosses, angles, stars, triangles, and other similar figures would be adopted by those who were unacquainted with the use of letters.

But reasonable and even attractive as this theory may at first glance appear, neither it nor the former one are sustained by the facts that are within our knowledge.



In Lyon's most valuable work on the Edinburgh Lodge we will find several facsimiles of the old minutes of the Lodge, in which are the signatures of the officers and members. Now, a careful inspection of these marks does not reveal any such arrangement or practice as is indicated in either of the two foregoing theories, and, therefore, supports neither of them.

Let us take, for instance, a minute of the Lodge dated in June, 1600. Here there are thirteen signatures and thirteen marks. Of these but one, that of the Warden, Thomas Vier, or Weir, is a monogram of that officer's name; the twelve others, all of them *Maisteris*, or Masters, are mathematical, or symbolical. Here we might infer that the chief officer alone used a monogram, which would, to some extent, sustain M. Didron's theory.

But on the inspection of another minute, of the year 1634, we find that the Deacon and the Warden use initial letters for their marks, while Anthony Alexander, the highest Masonic officer in the kingdom, being the King's Master of the Work, adopts a symbolic mark, a practice that was imitated by Sir Alexander Strachan who had just been admitted as a Fellow Craft.

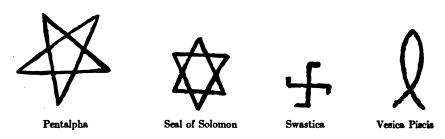
There is so much contradiction in these records, in reference to any giving of marks of a particular kind to show distinctive classes of workmen, that we are compelled to leave the whole question "under advisement."

It is, perhaps, a plausible solution to suppose that the choice of a mark, being left entirely to each workman it became a mere matter of taste. While some were content with a monogram or merely an initial letter, others, more imaginative, would select a symbol, or, if they were peculiarly mathematical in their notions, would take a geometrical figure.

It was probably only to one of the first class that could be truthfully assigned the title borne by that skillful architect, who had been summoned from Germany by Ludovic Sforza to complete the Cathedral of Milan. He, doubtless, for his skill in symbolic architecture by which he gave to stones an instructive voice heard by every attentive ear, was called *Magister de Vivis Lapidibus*— "Master of Living Stones"—a title of the greatest significance to all thoughtful Freemasons.



Four of these symbolic marks, which are of comparatively frequent occurrence, are the *pentalpha*, the *double triangle*, the *swastica* or *fylfot*, and the *vesica piscis*, which are shown in that order in the following cut:



Four Symbolic Marks Frequently Used of Old.

Bro. Mackey says it is worthy of note that not one of these four marks here shown is of purely Masonic origin. The first, which is the *Pentalpha*, is derived from the Greek, and was, in the school of Pythagoras, a symbol of health. Among the Orientalists it was deemed to be a talisman, or magical protection, or lucky charm against evil, and is often seen on old coins of Britain and Gaul, where it is supposed to have been a symbol of Deity. Finally, it was adopted by the early Christians, who referred its five points to the five wounds of Jesus. Probably it is true that through this character as religious symbol it passed over to the Freemasons, whose organization as we have seen was at first purely of the Church.

The second is a Hebrew symbol and known as the Shield of David, and sometimes as the Seal of Solomon, and was cherished by the ancient Jews as a talisman of great worth, because it had a profound allusion to the Tetragrammaton or four-lettered, incommunicable or ineffable name of God. The early Christians adopted it and made the two intersecting triangles symbols of the two natures of Christ, the divine and human. Thence it became a favorite decoration of the Gothic architects and is to be found in most of the mediæval churches.

The third mark, here exhibited, is what is known as the Fylfot, Swastica, or Mystic Cross of the Buddhists. It is found in

Egypt, in Etruria, on the Scandinavian Runic stones, and on British and Gaulish coins.¹

The fourth of these marks is known as the Vesica Piscis. The fish was universally accepted among the early Christians as a symbol of Jesus, and is found constantly inscribed on the tombs in the Catacombs. The fish was adopted as an emblem of Jesus, because the letters of the Greek word for fish form the initials of the words in the same language which signify "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour." At first, as it appears in the Catacombs, the Vesica Piscis presented the correct though rudely drawn shape of a fish. It afterward assumed the abbreviated form of an oval. In this latter form it was frequently employed by the Freemasons of the Middle Ages as a symbolic decoration, and the seals of all religious communities and church officials were made of the same shape.

Albert Dürer, a distinguished architect of the 15th century, wrote a work on Geometry which says that the *Vesica Piscis* is formed by two intersecting circles producing two pointed arches, one above and one below. It is probable that it was in reference to this idea, which was not confined to Albert Dürer, that the pointed arch, the peculiar characteristic of the Gothic style, was suggested by the intersection of the two circles which also form the *Vesica Piscis*, that the Freemasons adopted it as a mark, though its early religious origin would also sufficiently account for the introduction of it into church or Gothic architecture.

"The Vesica Piscis entered into the design of the structure of the central chamber in the great pyramid and was connected with the entire trend of Egyptian Masonry which that pyramid, internal and external, embodied and comprised. In the earliest era of the history of Freemasons, this geometrical figure or canon was adopted in all sacred buildings, its import being hid from the vulgar. We may trace it from Egypt through the Church of St. John Lateran, and old St. Peters at Rome, to the Church of Bath,

¹ George F. Fort, "Early History of Freemasonry," page 326, suggests that the Swastica "is an evident allusion to Thor's sacrificial hammer," Thor being a Scandinavian god. See also Hargraves Jennings, "The Rosicrucians," page 243. A most interesting and extended survey of the subject is to be found in the Smithsonian Report, 1894, by Thomas Wilson, Curator of the United States National Museum. See also p. 96, "Transactions," Installed Masters Association, Leeds, England, 1910–1911, vol. vii; Lodge of Research, "Transactions," 1909–1910, p. 103; and Lodge of Research, "Transactions," 1910–1911, p. 74; also "Tyler-Keystone," Feb. 20, 1910; "American Freemason," January, 1911.



one of the latest buildings in the pointed style of any consequence in England. It was formed by two equal circles, cutting each other in their centers, and was held in high veneration, having been adopted by Master Masons in all countries. In bas reliefs, which are seen in the most ancient churches, over doorways, it usually circumscribes the figure of our Saviour. It was indeed a principle which pervaded every building dedicated to the Christian religion.¹

But the further discussion of these symbolic marks belongs more properly to a later portion of this work specially devoted to the investigation and interpretation of Masonic symbolism.

Various other classifications of these marks have been made by writers upon this interesting subject.

M. Didron, who collected a great many of these marks in France, thought that they were divided into two classes, namely, those of the overseers of the works, the magistri operum, and the men who wrought the stones. The marks of the first class, he says, consist generally of letters from the alphabet and are placed separately on the stones; while those of the second class partake more of the nature of symbols, such as trowels, mallets, and similar objects.

Other writers have divided these marks into three classes, and suppose that some were peculiar to the Apprentices, others to the Fellows, and others again to the Masters.

There is abundant historical evidence, especially in the Ordinances of the German Craftsmen, that Apprentices were sometimes invested with a mark, particularly when, for certain reasons, they were permitted to travel, before the expiration of their time, in search of employment.

But we do not find any satisfactory means by which we can distinguish from the appearance of any mark, or from any other

¹ William Bardwell, "Temples, Ancient and Modern, or Notes on Church Architecture," London, p. 59. The author has other allusions of value to us. Note the following: "We have seen that the pointed arch was known in all the ages, but it was not until the incorporation of the Freemasons in the 18th century, that it was brought to that consistency and perfection in which we see it in their works. The Freemasons, like the Greek architects, carefully concealed their principles of design from the public eye; some few of their drawings have, however, been recently discovered among the archives of some German monasteries, which show the deep science, long foresight, and complicated calculations employed in their execution," p. 148. "Dædalus, an itinerant Freemason of the day, one of the Egyptian colonists, instructed the Greeks in sculpture and mechanics, and built an impregnable fortress at Agrigentum in the very beginning of Grecian history," p. 49.



cause, the marks which were peculiar to any grade, or by which we can authoritatively distinguish the mark of an Apprentice from that of a Fellow or Master.

Speaking of the traditional arrangement of marks into distinctive classes for each of the three grades of Masters, Fellows, and Apprentices, Lyon says that "the practice of the Lodge of Edinburgh, or that of Kilwinning, as far as can be learned from their records, was never in harmony with the teachings of tradition on that point." ¹

What is thus said of the Scottish Freemasons may be said with equal correctness of those of Germany and England. Indeed if, as will hardly be denied, the system of proprietary marks was originally derived from the German Masons, who perfected, if they did not invent, it at Strasburg, it is reasonable to suppose that the same or very similar regulations must have prevailed in every country into which the system was introduced. There might have been some modifications to suit local conditions, but there would have been no radical changes.

We must, therefore, reject the theory that there was any distinction of marks appropriated to the three ranks of workmen. Certainly, at the present day, we have no authority for recognizing any such distinction.

There are, however, outside of any question as to classification of the marks many circumstances connected with them which are of a highly interesting character.

In the first place, the antiquity of the custom among architects and builders of placing marks upon stones is worthy of notice. But in treating this question of the early origin and use of marks by builders, we must not forget the distinction, which has already been referred to, between such marks as were used simply as symbols, and intended to express some religious idea, and those which were adopted by builders to designate and claim the ownership in a stone, and which have hence been called proprietary marks.

There is the very best evidence, that of the stones themselves, to prove that symbols were sometimes represented by very simple hieroglyphics, and sometimes by more elaborate pictured representations of objects. The hieroglyphical inscriptions on the

¹ "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 69.



monuments of ancient Egypt and the emblems sculptured in profusion on the topes or Buddhist towers of Central India,¹ though often resembling the more modern Masonic marks, are known to have been used only as the expressions of religious ideas. They were symbols and not marks.²

The proprietary marks may, however, be traced as far back as the end of the 10th century, and are to be found upon the walls of the Cathedral of St. Mark in Venice. As this edifice was constructed after the Byzantine method and by Greek architects brought to Venice by the government for that purpose, we may safely adopt the conclusion of Fort, that Masonic proprietary marks were first introduced into western Europe by the corporations of Byzantine Freemasons.³

It is very probable that the use of Masonic marks at that period was regulated by a system similar to that which prevailed at a later time among the German Freemasons. But this can be only a matter of conjecture. No regulations on the subject have been preserved, if any existed. All that we can get from the testimony of the stones themselves, is that as the design of these marks was to afford the means of knowing the work of each artisan, each mark must have been the sole property of the mason using it.

Not until the organization of the Fraternity of Freemasons, which took place at Strasburg Cathedral in the 15th century, and the adoption of their Ordinances, do we obtain any documentary information of the mode in which the proprietary marks of the mediæval builders were regulated.

The universality of these marks is another point in their history that is worthy of notice. By their universality is meant their prevalence in every country into which the Freemasons penetrated, and where they extended their peculiar system of architecture. From the northern parts of Scotland to the



¹ See Fergusson's "Tree and Serpent Worship; or, Illustrations of Mythology and Art in India."

² Giovanni Belzoni, died 1823, in telling of his operations in opening the second pyramid, said that he got a clew to the entrance by certain marks on the exterior stones. Bro. Mackey says "This has been fancifully accepted as a proof that proprietary marks were used by the pyramid builders, although it is very evident that those marks were only hieroglyphic inscriptions." The subject is not entirely cleared up. Such Masonic references as are found in works upon Egyptian remains by Commander Gorringe and Prof. Amelia B. Edwards show the need for further research.

³ George F. Fort, "Early History and Antiquities of Masonry," ii, p. 325.

island of Malta, we meet with these marks sculptured on the stones of buildings constructed by this brotherhood of builders. It is curious, says Godwin, to find these marks exactly the same in various countries, and coming from early times to the present day.¹

The fact that in a great many instances identical marks have been found in countries widely separated, proves, as Godwin claims, in a passage already quoted, that the men who employed them did so by a system which must have prevailed in all essential points in every one of those countries.

M. Didron gives the following illustration of this fact. He found stones marked in the Cathedral of Rheims with a certain monogrammatic character, and the outline of the sole of a shoe; other stones with the same monogram and the outline of two soles, and others again with the same character and the outline of three soles.

The use of the same monogram would indicate a close connection, perhaps in the same Gild or Lodge, while the variation in the number of soles would indicate that each of the marks belonged to a different person.

This mark M. Didron calls the *shoe mark* — a very proper designation. As he found the same shoe mark at Strasburg, and in no other place, he accounts very reasonably for that fact by supposing that certain of the workmen at Rheims had been brought from Strasburg.

Dr. Krause has given in his great work a plate of marks found in the church of Batalha in Portugal, and which he says are similar to marks found in a church near Jena in Germany.² One of them of a rather archer archer

Amid the immense variety of marks suggested to the minds of the Craftsman, by an unlimited number of objects, it is very likely that sometimes two stonecutters, living at remote distances from each other, might, by a mere accident of fortune, select the



¹ "History in Ruins; a Handbook of Architecture for the Unlearned," by George Godwin, F.R.S., London, 1858.

² "Drei ältesten Kunsturkunden," iii, 311.

same thing for the mark of each. This especially might happen in the case of figures well known from some religious or symbolic use to which they had been applied. Such, for instance, were the *Pentalpha*, the mystical *Vesica Piscis*, or fish, the *Shield of David*, the *Square and Compasses*, and others of a like import, which were familiarly known in the Middle Ages as religious symbols.

Hence the fact that any one of these figures is found to be inscribed on stones in two or more places, would not necessarily indicate that the same workman had migrated from one of these places to the others and carried with him his own peculiar mark. Two, three, or more Freemasons, living in different places and who had never seen each other, might each have selected, without reference to the others, so familiar a figure as the *Pentalpha* or the fish, for his proprietary mark. This undoubtedly did occur, for we find these figures used as marks in buildings far distant from each other, and sculptured at such different epochs as to make it impossible that they could all have been the work of the same man.

But, as a general rule, when we meet with the same mark in two places, between which there may have been a possible connection, and at times not far separated, it is not unlikely that the marks belonged to the same person, and that he had travelled from one place to the other and had carried his skill and the mark of his ability with him.

The method by which these marks were obtained by the workmen or bestowed upon them is perhaps the most important and the most interesting part of their history.

The knowledge of the Regulations of the Strasburg Freemasons and of the customs of the same Fraternity in Scotland has been transmitted to us, and we are at no loss to describe the method of bestowing marks which was practiced in Germany and Scotland.²

However, it is singular that neither in the Regulations of Étienne Boileau in France, nor in any of the old Constitutions in



¹ Bro. Mackey was of opinion that "The vesica piscis, at first in the form of a fish, was placed by the early Christians on the tombs in the Catacombs of Rome, as a symbol of salvation by the waters of baptism. It was adopted, afterward, as a symbol in Christian art of the Saviour, and was so used by the Freemasons in the decoration of churches. Then some of the workmen, impressed with a religious feeling, took it as a proprietary mark, and it is found as such on stones of many mediaval buildings."

² While the existence of marks is recognized only in a single passage of the Ordinances of Strasburg, we have ample information as to the regulations on the subject in the writings of Stieglits, Fallou, Winzer, and other German authors who have thoroughly investigated the subject.

England, is there the slightest reference to the subject of Masonic proprietary marks.

We learn, however, from the inspection of buildings still remaining, that the custom of using proprietary marks was practiced by the Freemasons in both those countries. We may justly presume that the same or similar regulations as to their government existed among the French and English Freemasons as did among the German and Scottish.

Among the German Freemasons of the Middle Ages, when an Apprentice had served his time he became a Fellow, and on being admitted into the Fraternity, he received a mark to carve on the stones which he wrought, so as to identify his work.

The peculiar form of the mark may, we suppose, have been selected by the workman, though the statutes speak of it as having been "granted and conceded to him by the craft or corporation." The mark having been once selected or granted, he was never, as we learn from a clause in the Strasburg Ordinances of 1563 (see also Ordnung der Steinmetzen, 1462, article 73), permitted afterward to change it — wherever, in the course of his nomadic life as a wandering artisan, he might travel — into whatsoever region he might go in search of work, however distant it might be, he used the same mark on the materials he wrought.

Hence it is that we account, in a great many instances, for the repetition of the same mark in various places widely separated. Sometimes it might happen that, by a mere chance, two Craftsmen, in different places and wholly unknown to each other, would choose the same figure for a mark. But, as a general rule, especially where the mark was at all complicated or peculiar in shape, it would be right to infer that the stone so marked in two such widely separated places must have been the work of the same artisan who had traveled from one place to the other.

Thus, as it has already been shown, the *shoe marks*, as they have been called, which are very peculiar and complex, accompanied as each is by a monogram, having been found in the Cathedral of Strasburg and also in that of Rheims, it has been justly assumed by M. Didron that they were the proprietary marks of certain Freemasons of Strasburg who had been brought to Rheims and who continued to use there those marks of proprietorship which they had originally adopted at the former place.

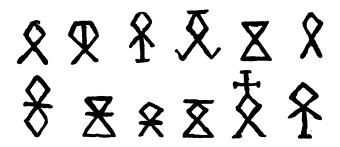


From this necessity of identification, so that the stones wrought by one Freemason might be easily distinguished from those which were worked by all the others, it followed that no two workmen who were attached to the same sodality or Lodge ever selected precisely the same mark. There were some forms, such as angles, crosses, squares, and triangles, which, being familiar to these geometric Freemasons, would naturally be suggested to the mind as proper figures for marks, and such were, accordingly, often selected. But in every case some modification of the original form has been made, which, however minute, has been sufficient to show a distinct difference, so as to easily enable every inspector to recognize it.

Thus of ninety-one proprietary marks copied by Lyon in his History of the Lodge of Edinburgh from the minute book of that Lodge, no two can be found which are precisely alike. Yet it will be also found that certain forms seem to have been suggested to several minds. But in all such cases, as has been said, the original form has always been adopted with some addition or change necessary to preserve its character and usefulness as a token or mark of proprietorship.

Thus the figure of a lozenge with two sidelines extended, which we are inclined to think was at first suggested by the *Vesica Piscis* given in a preceding page of this work, with the circle changed into straight lines for the greater facility of being chiselled on stone, appears to have been a favorite mark.

Of this mark we have found no less than eleven varieties, all of them distinct, each from the others, and yet every one preserving evident traces of the original type. The following copies of such marks are here inserted, taken from the two plates in Bro. Lyon's work. The first is the original type, and it will be readily seen how much and yet how little all the others differ from it.



This is a very striking instance of the way these old Freemasons invented their proprietary marks. One would select some popular and well-known symbol, and several others of less inventive genius would copy his design with some slight change or, in the language of heraldry, each would bear his mark "with a difference."

As heralds invented and used these "differences" in coat armor, to indicate a descent of all the bearers from one common ancestor, so might we not, with the aid of a very little romance, suppose that the owners of these similar marks bore some close affinity by relationship or friendship and intimacy to the owner of the original type.

But this thought is scarcely worth pursuing, though the results of an investigation on this point would be very interesting if we had any authentic method of following it up.

As a general rule, Masters and Fellows only were entitled to use marks. But in Germany there were circumstances under which the privilege was extended to Apprentices. Thus according to the Statutes of 1462, when a Master had no employment for his Apprentice, he permitted him to go forth in search of work, and on such occasions a mark was assigned to him.¹

But this was only a temporary loan to be used by the Apprentice while away. It was still the Master's mark. Apprentices in Germany were not invested with marks during their term of Apprenticeship.

This appears from the next Statute in the same Ordinances, where it is expressly stated that "No Master shall be permitted to bestow a mark upon his Apprentice until he has served out his time." ²

Note that in the former of these regulations which have just been cited, the verb "to lend," verleihen, is used, and in the latter the verb is "to grant or bestow," verschenken. The Apprentice might get the temporary loan of a mark for a special purpose, but under no circumstances could he be permanently given one. That right belonged only to Masters and Fellows.

This was not the case with the Scottish Freemasons. The Statutes issued by William Schaw, Master of Work in 1598 and in 1599, had the same authority with the Freemasons in Scot-

² See above work, No. 31.



¹ "Ordnung der Steinmetzen, 1462," No. 30.

land as the "Old Charges" had in England, the Ordinances of Strasburg and Torgau had in Germany, or the Regulations of Etienne Boileau had in France.

Accepting the authority of these Statutes we can be at no loss on the subject of marks. They say nothing about the marks of Apprentices, but they direct that on the reception into the Fraternity of a Master or Fellow, his name and mark shall be inserted in a book kept for the purpose, together with the date of his initiation.

But the minutes of Mary's Chapel Lodge and of Kilwinning Lodge furnish ample evidence that the privilege of the mark was sometimes extended to Apprentices, that their marks were also registered, and that they paid a fee for the registration.

Probably a satisfactory reason may be assigned why the Apprentices in Scotland received the privilege of marks which, as far as can be learned, was not conferred upon them in other countries.

Apprentices elsewhere were always under the immediate control of their Masters, and did no work independently and for which they were responsible to the owners, the Masters of course assuming all responsibility for the acts of their Apprentices.

But in Scotland, Apprentices were sometimes permitted to undertake work for themselves. Thus for a time they became as Masters, and were therefore, like them, required to have a proprietary mark.

Thus in the Schaw Statutes for 1598 we meet with this clause, which is here, however, transferred from the old Scottish idiom of the original to our modern tongue:

"Item, it shall not be lawful for an Entered Apprentice to take in hand any greater task or work than will extend to the sum of ten pounds, under the penalty aforesaid, namely twenty pounds, and that task being done, he shall undertake no more without the license of the Masters or Warden where they dwell."

Here the position of the Scotch Apprentice was similar to that occupied by the German. The Master, having no work for the Apprentice, permitted him to travel in search of employment and at the same time loaned him his mark; that is, gave him permission to use the Master's mark and to inscribe it on the stones which he finished.



But the Scotch Apprentice was more liberally treated. His mark became a permanent possession, and like those of the Masters and Fellows was registered in the book of the Lodge.

As to the formality with which the Freemason was invested with his mark, the custom varied in Scotland and in Germany. What it was in England and France we can not tell, as no early records touching this subject are extant.

In Scotland the registering of the mark as well as the name of the Fellow Craft appears from the Schaw Statutes to have been a necessary part of the form of reception. But it does not follow that he was at that time invested with it. He may have selected it while an Apprentice, for the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh show that any Apprentice might have a mark if he was willing to pay for it.¹

There is no evidence that any especial ceremony beyond that of registration accompanied what Scottish custom called the giving, choosing, taking or receiving of a mark. In none of the Scottish records, says Bro. Lyon, is there anything pointing to a special ceremony in connection with their adoption.²

The custom was otherwise in Germany. Findel describes the ceremony of reception, which resembled, in many respects, the modern form of initiation into the first degree. In this impressive ceremony the giving of a peculiar mark formed a leading part.³

The Ordinances of 1462 prescribed that when a mark is presented there shall be a banquet given by the Master of the Lodge, to which a few officials of the Church and not more than ten Fellows shall be invited. The cost of this feast was to be very moderate, and if the workman who received the mark, and in whose honor it was given, desired to have a larger provision, it was to be provided at his expense.⁴

Dr. Krause, in commenting on this article of the 1563 Ordinances, says that everyone who was to be admitted a Fellow received at the time a mark which was to be peculiar to himself, consisting of straight lines and curves joined together in the form of angles.⁵

- ¹ "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 68.
 ² See above work, p. 74.
- ³ "History of Freemasonry" (Lyon's Translation), p. 65.
- 4 "Ordnung der Steinmetzen, 1563." 5 "Kunsturkunden," iii, p. 311.



According to Heldmann this mark was called the *Ehrenzeichen*, or distinctive mark of a Fellow, and that a copy of it was attached to the margin of the register or record of his admission.¹

Krause calls it also "Namenchiffer," the cipher of the name, and adds, that with it the Fellow marked all stones in the making of which superior skill was employed.

"Hence we find," he says, "in every country of Europe in the buildings which were constructed by Gothic art on single stones, and also on the outside of the edifice, such name ciphers, or marks."

Krause also says that at the time of giving the Fellow his mark, he probably also received a particular name.

But of this circumstance, which after all, Krause relates as only a probability, we have met with no testimony in any other authority unless it really be but a reference to a password.

We are inclined to believe, contrary to the opinion of some writers, that there was but little or indeed no ceremony of any secret nature to go with the giving of the mark. The only formality appears to have consisted in the giving by the Lodge of a banquet. But that there were some ceremonies accompanying this is to be inferred from the fact that a few Church officials were admitted among the guests.

The giving of a banquet by the Lodge was also required by the Schaw Statutes of 1599 to be given by and in the Lodge on the entry of Apprentices and the admission of Fellow Crafts.² But Lyon thinks that the custom was afterward abolished and the cost of the feast compounded by a sum of money paid by the entrant to the Lodge.³

The Freemasons often made use of their marks as seals, and Stieglitz has given, in his work on *Old German Architecture*, several specimens of marks used in that way. We have already seen, in a preceding part of this chapter, that the mark of Walter Dixi was adopted by him as a family seal and affixed as such to a deed of conveyance in the 14th century.

- ¹ "Die drei ältesten geschichtlichen Denkmale der Deutschen Freimaurerbrüderschaft." Arnan, 1819, p. 282.
- ² All bankattis for entrie of prenteis or fallow of craftis to be maid within the said Lodge of Kilwinning, Schaw Statutes, 1599.
 - 3 "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 44.
 - 4 "Von altdeutscher Baukunst." C. S. Stieglitz, Leipsic, 1820.



Lastly we have to inquire whether proprietary marks were handed down from father to son. We have no evidence that there was any Statute or Ordinance regulating this matter, but there can hardly be any doubt that in many instances the son voluntarily adopted the mark of his father. The case of the family of Dixi, just mentioned, is an instance in point where a certain mark appears to have descended through at least three generations.

But a circumstance occurred during the Session of the Archæological Association at Canterbury in September, 1844, which it would seem ought to set this question of the descent of marks by voluntary inheritance completely at rest.

It is stated in the Archæological Journal that a member of the Association, believing that marks were quite arbitrary on the part of the workmen and had no connection either one with another or with Freemasonry, requested Godwin to accompany him to the Stonecutters' yard attached to the Cathedral. When there, he called one of the elder men and asked this workman to make his mark upon a piece of stone. The man complied, and being asked why he made that particular form, said that it was his father's mark and his grandfather's mark, and that his grandfather had received it from the Lodge.¹

Doubtless, if the inquiry had been continued, it would have been found that many other marks had passed from fathers to sons. Indeed, nothing is more natural where the latter followed the trade of the former.

Our investigations have led to the following conclusions:

- 1. The existence of proprietary marks on European buildings may be traced as far back as the 10th century. They were probably brought over at that time by the Greek artists who introduced the Byzantine style of architecture, for which the Freemasons afterwards substituted the Gothic.
- 2. But it was not until the 15th century that we were furnished with any historical evidence that there was an organized system of laws by which the imparting, owning, and using of these marks was regulated. Doubtless such a system had been in existence long before that date. However, we are justified

¹ "Archæological Journal," vol. i, p. 383, note, mentioned by Pryor in the "Freemasons' Quarterly Review," 1845, p. 441.



in believing its practice was regulated by oral and traditional usages, until old customs having begun to be neglected or forgotten, it was found necessary to revive and renew them by formal, written Constitutions.

Hence it is in the German Ordinances of 1462 that we Freemasons are to look for the first written laws regulating the subject of proprietary marks.

If we have no authentic documents which refer to this subject prior to the 15th century, it is not because a system of giving and receiving marks, and a formally approved method of using them, did not exist before that period. The reason is that, to use the language of Findel, it was only when the ancient forms had begun to fall into decline, when the taste for forming leagues and confederacies was on the wane, and when the true comprehension of the meaning of the ancient ritual, usages, and discipline was beginning to disappear, that the Freemasons felt the necessity of reviving the ancient Landmarks and of giving them due standing and authority by written Constitutions.

Of these ancient Landmarks not the least important was the use by Stonemasons of proprietary marks. Hence we find that regulations for their control were not invented, but transferred from oral tradition, word of mouth, to a written document, so that there might be no excuse of a neglect or infringement of them.

- 3. As we find this system of marks prevailing in Germany, in France, in England, and in Scotland, as well as in many other places, we have a right to infer that as the marks were often of the same form, the same system of regulations or similar conditions prevailed in all those countries.
- 4. The marks were not selected at random or carelessly and liable to be changed at the fancy or whim of the owner, but were only obtained after laborious study of the principles of the Gothic art and proper proofs of skill. Having been bestowed with some formal ceremony, however brief, the proprietor was not permitted at any time or for any cause to change the style or shape or character of the mark, but was obliged always after its acceptance to keep it as his own, his brand or trademark, and to affix it to all stones which he shaped with superior skill and care.



^t "History of Freemasonry" (Lyon's Translation), p. 73.

- 5. These marks were sometimes made up of letters from the alphabet, sometimes geometrical, and sometimes symbolic. Notwithstanding some writers have entertained a contrary opinion, there is no authentic evidence that the choice of the character of the mark was governed by any rules which bestowed the marks with either of the above peculiarities upon different classes or ranks of the workmen. Yet, it is not improbable that some such rules may have prevailed, though there is no documentary evidence to be found of their existence. It must, however, be confessed that the fact that in Germany Apprentices were permitted, under certain circumstances, to employ the mark of their Masters, would seem to indicate that there could not have been any difference in the character of the marks used by the different ranks of Freemasons.
- 6. In some cases proprietary marks were hereditary, and there are instances known where the son or the grandson has assumed the mark of his father or grandfather. But there does not seem to have been any law making such heritage obligatory. If the son adopted the mark of his father it was because he chose to do so. He might, with perfect propriety, and most frequently did, select a different mark. All Statutes and Ordinances are silent on the subject.

Very intimately connected with this subject of proprietary marks is that of the Mark Degree. Whatever was the date and the place of its origin, this was undoubtedly founded upon and is to be traced to the customs of the Operative Freemasons.

The fact of the existence of this degree, which continues the usage of marks in modern rituals, is another important link in the chain which connects the Operative Freemasonry of the Middle Ages with the Speculative Freemasonry of the present day.

As such it is entitled to due investigation, and it will therefore be made the subject of a following chapter, though the continuity of our researches into the progress of mediæval Freemasonry will by this course be to some extent interrupted. But we know no better plan than to let the history of Speculative Mark Masonry immediately and continuously follow that of Operative Mark Masonry. This is but the natural transfer from the discussion of a cause to a treatment of its effect.



CHAPTER SIXTY-NINE

THE MARK DEGREE



HERE is no stronger or more convincing proof of the connection between the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages and those of the present day, and of the regular descent of the one from the other, than that furnished by the existence in the modern rituals of a degree the ceremonies of which have been evi-

dently founded on the system of proprietary Marks which prevailed among the Stonemasons of Germany, and which passed from them into all the other countries of Europe.

If all the other authentic testimonies of the fact that about the beginning of the 18th century there was a change of an Operative Art into a Speculative Science, were erased from the record, the apparently extraordinary phenomenon that there exists in the latter, and in the latter only, a peculiar and extraordinary system, which also prevailed in the former, and in the former only, would be sufficient to warrant the conclusion that there must have been a very intimate relation between the two associations with which this system was connected.

Therefore, as a connecting link of that great chain which, beginning with the Roman Colleges of Artificers, extended to the early Craftsmen of Gaul and Britain, to the Traveling Freemasons of Lombardy and Germany, and ending in the Free and Accepted Masons of modern times, a thorough consideration of the rise and progress of the Mark degree must be deemed essential to the completeness of any work on the history of Freemasonry.

In pursuing this investigation it will be necessary to inquire, firstly, what is the position of the Mark degree in the modern ritual; secondly, what is its character and legendary history; and thirdly, what was its real historical origin as distinguished from the mythical account of its fabrication as given in its legends.



To an investigation of these important and, to the student of Masonic antiquities, interesting points, the present chapter will be devoted.

The Mark degree, or to define it more accurately according to the accepted title, the degree of Mark Master, forms the fourth degree or the first of what are called the Capitular degrees in the American Rite as practiced in the United States. In Scotland and Ireland it is a degree recognized by the Grand Lodge of these countries. In England it is not recognized by the Grand Lodge. The Articles of Union, adopted in 1813, defined Ancient Craft Freemasonry to consist only of the first three degrees, including the Royal Arch. Hence, there being no place provided for the Mark degree, it was ignored in English Freemasonry until its growth led to its being placed under an independent jurisdiction called the Mark Grand Lodge, a body which was established in 1865.

An attempt had been made in 1855 to have the Mark degree definitely recognized by the Grand Lodge of England. A committee was appointed to represent both Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter in the matter. A report was made and in March, 1856, the Grand Lodge resolved "That the Degree of Mark Mason or Mark Master is not at variance with the ancient Landmarks of the Order, and that the Degree be an addition to and form part of Craft Masonry; and consequently may be conferred by all regular Warranted Lodges under such regulations as shall be prepared by the Board of General Purposes, approved and sanctioned by the M. W. Grand Master." But later reflections found fault with this declaration and on motion at the June meeting of the Grand Lodge in 1856 it was resolved that such portion of the minutes of the last meeting as related to the subject of Mark Masons be not confirmed.

At once the Grand Lodge of "Mark Master Masons of England and Wales, and the Colonies and Dependencies of the British



¹ Let it not be hastily assumed that the Articles of Union, adopted in 1813 by the United Grand Lodge of Ancient Freemasons of England, limited Masonic activities to no more than the working of these degrees. A careful reading of Article II gives a far different understanding, and we will therefore quote it in full as follows:

[&]quot;It is declared and pronounced, that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more; viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch. But this article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of Chivalry, according to the Constitutions of the said Orders."

Crown" came into being, June 23, 1856, and is today a flourishing organization.

On the Continent of Europe and in all countries the Freemasonry of which is not derived immediately from and is in intimate connection with the Freemasonry of England and America, the Mark degree is entirely unknown. There is not in any of the German, French, Italian, or Spanish rituals the slightest allusion to it.

In the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite the Mark degree at one time held a distinct position, though it has ever since the beginning of this century or the close of the last, been stricken from its ritual. Of this fact there is undeniable proof.

Bro. Mackey had in his possession an original Warrant or Charter, granted in the year 1804 by the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem to American Eagle Master Mark Masons Lodge No. 1, in Charleston, South Carolina, and he also states that there is in the archives of the Supreme Council for the Southern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States, the ritual of the degree as at the time conferred, which appears to have been only on Past Master Masons of the Scottish Rite who were recognized by the possession of Scottish degrees as Past Masters.¹

There is no evidence, however, that other lodges were established by the same authority. At least no other similarly issued Charters have to our knowledge been discovered.²

At the time of the establishment of the Supreme Council at Charleston, in 1801, the jurisdiction over the degree had probably been assumed by the Scottish Rite Freemasons, for the Warrant just mentioned was granted by the Council of Princes of Jerusalem, which was a body subordinate to the Supreme Council.

At the present time the Mark degree forms a part of the Rite practiced in the United States, and is under the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapters being the fourth of the Capitular degrees.



¹ That is, on Master Masons who had received the preliminary degrees of the Scottish Rite, who were assumed in their own Rite to be Past Masters. The Circular of the Charleston Supreme Council, issued in 1802, says that "Throughout the Continent of Europe, England, Ireland, and the West Indies, every Sublime Mason is recognized as a lawful Past Master."

² The American Eagle Master Mark Masons Lodge was in existence at least as late as 1807, and a list of its officers is given in the register published in that year by J. J. Negrin, and appended to his "Free Masons' Vocal Assistant," p. 25.

Up to nearly the middle of the 19th century the degree was conferred sometimes in a Lodge working under the Warrant granted by the Grand Chapter to a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, and sometimes in a Mark Masters Lodge working under a special and distinct Charter from the Grand Chapter. But in 1853 this system was abolished by the General Grand Chapter, and independent Mark Masters Lodges no longer exist in America.

In Scotland, after the transition of Operative into Speculative Freemasonry, the Mark degree was worked originally by a few Lodges under their Craft Warrant, and it was then conferred as an addition or part of the Fellow-Craft degree. This was done as late as 1860, by a Lodge at Glasgow. This action, however, attracted the notice of the Grand Chapter, and having in conference with the Grand Lodge thoroughly investigated the subject, the following report was made. As giving a summary of the rise and progress of the degree in Scotland, and of the changes of position to which it was subjected, this report is well worthy of quotation.

It was unanimously agreed by the Committee of Conference "that what is generally known under the name of the Mark Master's degree was wrought by the Operative Lodges of St. John's Masonry in connection with the Fellow-Craft degree before the institution of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. That since that date it has continued to be wrought in the Old Operative Lodges, but in what may be called the Speculative Lodges it was never worked at all—or at all events only in a very few. That this degree being, with the exception of the Old Operative Lodges above mentioned, entirely abandoned by the Lodges of St. John's Masonry, the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter assumed the management of it as the Fourth degree of Masonry, in order to complete the instruction of their candidates in the preliminary degrees, before admitting them to the Royal Arch. And, finally, that this degree, whether viewed as a second part of the Fellow-Craft degree or as a separate degree, has never been recognized or worked in England, Ireland, or the Continent, or in America, as a part of St. John's Masonry."



¹ By "St. John's Masonry" is meant in Scotland the three symbolic degrees, E. A., F. C., and M. M.

We find that it was also stated by a delegate of the Grand Lodge of Scotland at a conference on the subject of the Mark degree, held at London in 1871, that long before the institution of the Grand Lodge of Scotland two classes of Lodges existed in that kingdom; namely, those which worked only the First and Second degrees and of which the Mark Master or Overseer was Master, and those which worked the First, Second, and Third degrees, over which a Master Mason presided.

Both of these statements show errors in respect to the Mark degree. These mistakes have been corrected by later investigations. Bro. Lyon, whose authority on this subject is unquestionable, says that the claims in regard to an organization for conferring the Mark under Mark Masters or Overseers are unsupported by any existing records. The Lodges previous to the 18th century "knew nothing of the degrees of Mark Men, Mark Master, or Master Mason."

As a degree of Freemasonry, in the sense which we give to the word "degree," the system of Mark Freemasonry was wholly unknown to the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages. We have shown that in Germany every Apprentice who had served his time, on being admitted as a Fellow Craft received a Mark, which was to be his unchangeably during his life. The giving of this mark of distinction was generally accompanied by a banquet, furnished to a certain extent at the expense of the Lodge which admitted him. But there is not the least allusion in any document extant to the fact that the bestowal of the mark was accompanied by any secret ceremonies which would give it the slightest resemblance to a degree.

But the very instinct of a group of persons engaged in a serious and important ceremony, approving of a certain Mark which was to be preserved for life by the one receiving it and having a use that meant much to every one in that trade, must have invited and probably suggested a method or ritual to impress upon all present the fullest meaning and purpose of their engagements one to another. If this did not result in a typical and appropriate ceremony the case would be exceptional and opposed to all our experience. Even in so slight a connection as the entrance of a new student at school or college the prac-

¹ "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 71.



tice of "hazing" is so common a custom as to prove the tendency of the group mind of mankind. The newcomer in the trades has like initiation. Surely the giving of the Mark had similar treatment and results.

In Scotland the Statutes of William Schaw required all Fellows, and sometimes Apprentices, to select their Marks. These Marks were to be recorded, and a fee was paid for their registration. But as Bro. Lyon says, there is not anything in the records of the period which points to a special ceremony in connection with their adoption.

In England preceding the middle of the 18th century we have nothing in reference to Marks in the Old Charges or to the Mark degree in the minutes of Lodges, either in Operative or Speculative Freemasonry.

We are indebted to Bro. Hughan, that tireless student, for the earliest authentic record we possess of the existence of the Mark degree in Scotland. It is contained in an extract from the minutes of the Operative Lodge at Banff, the date being January 7, 1778. The minute is in the following words:

"That in time coming all members that shall hereafter raise to the degree of Mark Mason, shall pay one mark Scots, but not to obtain the degree of Mark Mason before they are passed Fellow-Craft. And those that shall take the degree of Mark Master Masons shall pay one shilling and sixpence sterling into the Treasurer for behoofe of the Lodge. None to attain to the degree of Mark Master Mason until they are raised Master."

From this record we learn that at that time there were two degrees in connection with the mark—one called "Mark Mason," probably the same which was distinguished elsewhere as "Mark Man," to which degree Fellows were eligible, and another called "Mark Master Mason," which was conferred only on Master Masons.

We are not, however, to credit the year 1778, the date of the record, as the date of the institution in Scotland of either of the degrees. The minutes only prove that the degrees were then in existence, and show the regulation by which they were governed.

The making of these degrees must have taken place at an earlier period, but how much earlier we are unable to say. But probably we would be safe in saying that neither of the degrees



was put into working form prior to the middle of the 18th century. Otherwise, some notice of them would occur in the minutes of the Lodges of Mary's Chapel and Kilwinning. But those minutes have been thoroughly digested by Bro. Lyon, and no such notice has been disclosed.

The earliest mention of the two Mark degrees in England is found in the Minute Books of St. Thomas Lodge No. 142 in London.

The minutes of the Lodge in connection with this subject were transcribed by Bro. H. C. Levander, Secretary of the Lodge, and are contained in a letter from Bro. T. B. Whytehead, Past Master of York Mark Lodge, which was inserted in the Report of the Committee on Correspondence to the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania, and published in the proceedings of that body for the year 1879. From the minutes of the Lodge, of August 14, 1777, we are put in possession of important facts bearing on this subject. The minute is as follows:

"August 14, 1777.

"Regular Lodge night, the W. M., the Wardens, the Secretary, and Treasurer present worked in the First and Second degrees, made the following brothers Mark Masons and also Mark Master Masons, opened at 6 o'clock."

From this and from other minutes of the Lodge of later date but of the same purport, we glean the facts that in 1777, and no doubt earlier (the Lodge was warranted in 1775), the two degrees of Mark Man and Mark Master were worked in the South of England as an addition to the Fellow-Craft's degree.

The Lodge of St. Thomas received its Warrant from the Grand Lodge of "Antients," or Athol Grand Lodge, which held close and amicable relations with the Grand Lodge of Scotland. But there is also evidence that at a later period, the Mark degree was worked by an English Lodge holding its Warrant from the Grand Lodge of "Moderns," the other Grand Lodge of England, though that body had no favor for any degrees except the three symbolic degrees.

Bro. Whytehead, in the article before mentioned, supplies us with an extract from the minutes of the Imperial George



Lodge of Middleton in Lancashire, which had been warranted in 1752 by the Grand Lodge of "Moderns." The minute is dated March 9, 1809, and is in these words:

"This lodge was opened in due form at 8 o'clock, in peace and good harmony.

"When the following Brethren were made Mark Masons."

Bro. Whytehead also refers to the Directory of Minerva Lodge No. 250 at Hull, as showing that in the year 1802 that Lodge conferred, besides several other degrees, those of "Ark, Mark, and Link."

Though there was no regular book of the Mark Lodge, yet the Secretary, Bro. M. C. Peck, states that the marks were entered in the Craft minute book.

In Kenning's Masonic Cyclopædia, Bro. Woodford says: "It is undoubtedly true that in Scotland the 'Falows of Craft' took up their Marks, but we are not aware, so far, of any corresponding use in England." 1

But the records of St. Thomas Lodge of London in 1775 and of Minerva Lodge of Yorkshire in 1809, show that marks were selected and recorded by brethren when they received the Mark degree. The Mark was attached to the name of the brother.

A very early minute of the Mark degree is found in the first entry of the No. 1 Minute Book of the Royal Arch Chapter, formerly No. 3 of the "Moderns" (now No. 257), Portsmouth, England, formed in 1769. This record is in an unusual cipher. Bro. Thomas Dunckerley was present at the communication and as Provincial Grand Master brought the warrant. The record reads thus:

"Having lately rec'd the *Mark*, he made the bre'n *Mark Masons* and *Mark Masters*, and each chuse their *Mark*, viz., He also told us of this mann of writing, which is to be used in the degree w'ch we may give to others so they may be F. C. for Mark Masons and Master M. for Mark Masters."



¹ Kenning's "Cyclopædia." See reference to Mark Man, p. 453.

² This puzzling record was deciphered by Bro. Alexander Howell for use in his history of the Phoenix Lodge and Chapter, No. 257, and the K. T. Preceptory, No. 2, of 1791. Published at Portsmouth, England, 1894.

The minutes of this Royal Arch Chapter are continued in this secret writing to 1786. At times the Mark degree seems to have followed and at other times preceded the conferring of the Royal Arch.

A curious entry is to the effect that a "Brother Donaldson told us how to make Excellent and Super-Excellent Masons," Nov. 2, 1770. On July, 1771, four brethren were made "Mark Masons and Mark Masters, also R. A. Masons and Excellent and Super-Excellent Masons, and each paid eighty-two shillings." 1

Another mention of the early Mark degree is dated Dec. 21, 1773, in the minute book of the Marquis of Granby Lodge, No. 124, Durham, England, when "Bro. Barwick was also made a Mark'd Mason, and Bro. James Mackinlay raised to the degree of a Master Mason, and also made a Mark Mason, and paid accordingly."²

So that if, by the expression "Taking up their Marks," of which, Bro. Woodford says, there was no "corresponding use in England," he means that the English Mark Masons did not select and register their Marks, just as they did in Scotland, these records show that he is clearly in error.

Bro. Woodford also says, in the same article, "Mark Man, in our humble opinion, is historically synonymous with Mark Mason."

But the same records prove that in 1775 the degree of Mark Man was distinct from that of Mark Master, though in 1809 the Minerva Lodge does not appear to have practiced the former.

Whether we call the first of these degrees Mark Man or Mark Mason, and the latter Mark Mason or Mark Master Mason, the words Mark Man and Mark Mason, in the meaning given to them at the present day, are not synonymous, and never could have been, because they indicate two distinct things.

These minutes also show that in the 18th century the Mark degree was worked independently by certain Blue Lodges under their Grand Lodge Warrants. It was, however, rejected as a degree, or rather not recognized by the United Grand Lodge,



¹ "Origin of the English Rite of Freemasonry," by W. J. Hughan, revised edition, Leicester, England, 1909, p. 147.

² See above work, p. 148.

in the Articles of Union adopted in 1813. The Mark degree has, however, always been recognized in Scotland and in Ireland as a part of Speculative Freemasonry necessarily leading up to the Royal Arch.

The Mark degree was introduced into the United States at a time later than the middle of the 18th century. Lacking sufficient authentic documents, it is impossible to affix the precise date of the introduction of the Mark degree into America, but it would be more correct to place that date at about the close rather than immediately after the middle of the century. "Independent Mark Lodges," says Bro. Hughan, "were scattered throughout the United States of America during the latter part of the last (the 18th) century and early in the present (the 19th) one." This, Bro. Mackey had no doubt, as the result of his own investigations, is the proper date of the introduction of the degree in this country.

The late Bro. F. G. Tisdall, who was the Master of St. John's Lodge No. 1 in the city of New York, asserted in an address delivered at the Centennial of the Lodge, in 1857, that the Lodge received its original Warrant from the Grand Lodge of England in the year 1757, under the Grand Mastership of Lord Aberdour, and that to this written authority was "annexed a Warrant with power to make Mark Masons."

If this assertion were true it would establish two important historical facts: first, that the Mark degree was recognized in the middle of the 18th century by the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns), and secondly, that it was practiced at the same period in the United States.

Unfortunately, Brother Tisdall has verified neither of these statements by authentic documents, and we are compelled to let them rest in the regions of the unproven and the mythical, where so many hundreds of haphazard statements concerning Masonic history have found at last a quiet resting-place.²

He has, however, cited an extract from the minutes which shows that in the year 1796 there was a Mark Lodge, connected



¹ Mackey's "National Freemason," February, 1873, vol. ii, p. 348.

² In the "National Freemason," Bro. Hughan has an able criticism on the address of Bro. Tisdall as well as on similar essays by Tisdall in Pomeroy's "Democrat." Hughan proves that the claims of Tisdall for so early an existence in America of the Mark degree have no historical foundation.

in some way with the Craft Lodge, St. John, and that at that time the Mark degree was conferred by it.¹

It must be admitted as a well-proven historical fact that Mark Lodges existed in America and that the Mark Master's degree was conferred at the earliest about the close of the 18th century.

Probably it came to American from Scotland or from the Athol Grand Lodge of England. St. John's Lodge of New York, already mentioned, though it was originally warranted by the Grand Lodge of "Moderns," afterward attached itself to the Grand Lodge of New York which was established by the "Antients," under the Duke of Athol in 1781. As has been shown by Bro. Hughan, notwithstanding the assertion of Bro. Tisdall, there is no mention in the records of a Mark Lodge or of the Mark degree, until St. John's Lodge became connected with the "Antients."

Though it is not unlikely that in America, as in Scotland and England, the Mark Master's degree was conferred in connection with Craft Lodges, we learn by reliable testimony that it was about the beginning of the 19th century, perhaps a few years earlier, worked in Mark Lodges which seem to have been under the charge of Chapters.

Webb, in the 1812 edition of his *Freemason's Monitor*, records two Mark Lodges in Rhode Island and seventeen in New York. The Grand Chapters of both States were organized in 1798. But there were Royal Arch Chapters in existence before this date, and Mark Lodges also.

The first constitution adopted in 1798 by the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Northern States of America, which body afterward became the General Grand Chapter of the United States, recognizing the Mark Master Mason's degree as a part of its system. The 1799 Constitutions provided for the granting of warrants to hold Mark Master Masons Lodges separately.

For a long time afterwards Mark Lodges were held generally in the bosom of the Chapters and under Chapter Warrants, and sometimes in distinct Lodges under Warrants issued by the State Grand Chapters. Perhaps the last of these was

¹ The minute reads as follows: "The accounts of St. John's Mark Lodge No. 1, made up to December 23, 1796, show a balance due to the treasury of £3 18s."



St. John's Mark Lodge No. 1, in the city of Charleston, South Carolina.

But in the year 1856 the General Grand Chapter abolished independent Mark Lodges, and ever since the degree has been conferred in a Lodge working within a Chapter and under the Chapter Warrant.

The theory that the Mark degree was brought to America by the Freemasons of the Scottish Rite, is founded on the fact that in the year 1803 a Mark Lodge had been warranted in the city of Charleston by the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem. We deem it more probable that the jurisdiction over the degree was assumed in that case by the Council, the degree having existed long before in this country, whither it had been brought from Scotland and England through Charters issued for the establishment of subordinate Lodges of Craft Freemasons.

Indeed the Mark degree appears to have been something of a waif floating on the waters—a sort of flotsam and jetsam—without any lawful owner, and claimed and seized sometimes by Royal Arch Chapters, sometimes by Craft Lodges, sometimes by independent Mark Lodges, and lastly by the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. The degree was traveling about during the close of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries like Marryat's "Japhet," in search of a father. Fortunately, it found foster parents in Scotland, Ireland, and America, in the Grand Chapters. In England, maternal relations are exercised by the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons.

From this sketch of the position occupied by Mark Freemasonry in the series of Masonic grades, we pass to a consideration of its Legend—that mythical history fashioned at the time of its adoption as a part of the system of Speculative Freemasonry.

Pursuing our further investigations in this way we necessarily abandon the functions of the historian and assume those of the fabulist. Yet the research is of great importance. The fact of the direct descent of Speculative Freemasonry from the Operative Art practiced by the mediæval builders, is by no circumstance more clearly and positively proved than by that modification of the system of Marks peculiar to the latter, a modification invented by the former.



The practice of using proprietary Marks, common among the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages, and which lasted longer in Scotland than in any other country, undoubtedly suggested to the Speculative Freemasons the thought which resulted in the shaping of the Mark degree. At first the idea of a proprietary Mark may have occurred to the inventors of the various legends. If so, it gradually was put aside and at this day the Mark of a Speculative Mark Master bears in its accepted character and use a much closer resemblance to the *Tessera Hospitalis* of the ancients than to the ownership mark of an Operative Freemason of the Middle Ages. To this particular point we will return in due course.

As the government of the Mark degree varied in several countries and at different times, so the Legend seems also to have changed. We find several forms of it in the rituals of the degree.

About the middle of the 18th century or a little later, when in Scotland and England the Mark system was divided into two grades, Mark Man and Mark Master, the design of the Mark was supposed to be very different from that of showing ownership.

The duty of the Mark Men, as the degree teaches, was to examine the materials as they came out of the hands of the workmen, and then to place a Mark upon them so as to enable them to be put together with greater facility and precision when brought from the quarries, the forest, and the clay-grounds to Jerusalem. These Marks were mathematical figures, as squares, levels, and perpendiculars which were used by command of King Solomon.

The Mark Masters were to examine the materials when they were brought to the Temple to see that every piece duly corresponded, and thus to prevent confusion and delay in fitting the respective parts to their proper places.

In doing this they were, of course, guided by the Marks which had been placed upon the stones and other materials by the Mark Men. The Mark Masters then placed an additional Mark upon them to show that they approved the work which had been previously examined by the Mark Men. In all this there is not a suggestion of ownership. Stones were marked by the medi-



seval Freemason, so that the work of each man might be identified and he be made responsible for its imperfection or receive due credit for its merit.

But the stones and timbers were not according to this Legend marked for any such purpose by the workmen, who "hewed, cut, and squared" them. The Mark was placed upon them by the Mark Masters, who superintended the Craftsmen in the quarries and the forests, and who placed a Mark on each stone and timber so that when transported to Jerusalem, the Mark Masters would find no difficulty, guided by these Marks, in placing those materials accurately together.

Such a system prevails even now among stonemasons, carpenters, and joiners, so as to point out precisely the positions to be occupied by the several parts of the work upon which they are engaged when these are put together.

This is altogether different from the system of ownership Marks used by the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages.

There was another legend introduced at a later period, for the preliminary degree of Mark Man appears to have been omitted by that time from the system. Probably this was the ritual practiced in America before the close of the 18th Century. It is that used by the Mark Lodge in Charleston, which had been chartered in 1804 by the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem. We have every reason to believe that this was the ritual used at that time by the Mark Lodges in America, from whom the Charleston Mark Lodge must have received it, as there is no other source known from which it could have been derived.

The Legend in this ritual differs very materially from the former, which has been just described. There is no longer a claim that the Mark was used as a means of indicating that two distinct pieces of material were made to fit together. That idea has now been dropped from the degree.

In this more modern Legend, the Mark is said to have been used for two purposes. In the first place, Hiram Abif, seeing that it was impossible for him to personally superintend so large a number of workmen as were employed in the building of the Temple, appointed overseers to the various classes. He was careful to select only men of highest character for this responsible office.



He was particularly attached to the Giblemites¹ whom he formed into a body. Their duty it was, as overseers, to procure from the Treasurer-General such sums of money as were necessary to pay off the workmen over whom they presided. The payment of wages was done at a particular time and in a particular place.

To ease the task of payment, and to prevent error or fraud among the workmen, the Giblemites were ordered to provide for themselves a particular Mark by which they and the amount due to each one were easily recognized; and presenting this Mark in a particular manner, every Mark Master received at once the wages due to him.

But the Mark thus selected was to be used not on the stone as a proof of who was the cutter of the stone, but only as a jewel or token to be employed at the hour of receiving wages, so that the paymaster might commit no error in the payment.

The Mark was used also for another purpose. This purpose was one utterly unknown to the Operative Freemasons or to the Speculative Freemasons who first founded the degree.

A Mark Master, being in distress or danger, has a talisman or guarantee for relief in his Mark. He sends it, as we are instructed, to a Mark Mason, who instantly obeys the summons and flies to his assistance with a heart warmed with the impulse of brotherly love.

The Mark might also be put in pledge if the owner was "in the utmost distress"; and he was to redeem it as soon as that opportunity should be again in his power.

In this way the Mark of the Speculative Freemasons gradually ceased to bear any likeness to that of the Operative Stone-cutters whence it was originally derived. It was no longer a device placed by a Craftsman upon the stone he had wrought, and the ownership of which he by this token claimed—not a proprietorship in the material, but in the workmanship with which his skill had fitted it for the building.

The first ritual of the Mark degree, adopted at the time most probably of its institution, though this design of a proprietary

¹ An allusion to the "stone-squarers" of I Kings V, 18, where a marginal note refers to them as "Giblites." These were men from the Phœnecian city of Gebal. The Revised Version of the Bible gives "Gebalites." See also Ezekiel xxvii, 9.



Mark was not exactly observed, had the Speculative Mark for an architectural purpose, that of indicating the proper position of the materials.

There was enough of a relation to the Operative preserved by the Speculative Mark to prove clearly the one came from the other.

But now all resemblance to the Operative Art was wiped out. The more recent Mark Masters began to look outside of the Craft of Operative Freemasons for characteristics to apply to the Mark. It became to each of them, as it is called in one lecture, a "talisman," a means of obtaining relief, either by summoning with it a brother Mark Master to his assistance, or by pledging it to obtain the loan of money.

In plain words it ceased to have any relation to the owner-ship mark of the Cologne and Strasburg Freemasons, and found its true copy in the Tessera Hospitalis of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The Tessera Hospitalis, or "Cube of Hospitality" was a piece of bone, stone, ivory, or any other material. A custom among the ancients provided that when two persons became allied as friends, they took such a cube or token, which they divided into two parts, each person writing his name upon one of the halves which were then interchanged. The Scholiast of Euripides says that if at any future period either needed assistance, on showing his broken half of the block to the other the required aid was, if possible, granted.

Plautus, the Roman dramatist, gives an interesting instance of the use of the *Tessera* in the interview between Agorastocles and his unknown uncle, Hanno, described in the play of "Pœnulus."

Hanno. Hail, my countryman.

Agorastocles. Whosoever thou art, I hail thee also in the name of Pollux. If thou needest anything, speak, I beseech thee, and ask it for the sake of thy country.

Hanno. I thank thee, but I have a lodging here. Show me, if you know him, Agorastocles, the son of Antedamas. Knowest thou here a certain youth called Agorastocles?

Agorastocles. If thou art looking for the adopted son of Antedamas, I am the one thou art seeking.

Hanno. Ha! what do I hear?



Agorastocles. That I am the son of Antedamas.

Hanno. If this be so, compare with me, if thou pleasest, the Dice of Hospitality (*Tessera Hospitalis*); here it is, I have brought it with me.

Agorastocles. Come then, let me see it. It is the exact counterpart of that which I have at home.

Hanno. Much I greet thee, oh, my friend! for thy father, Antedamas, thy father, I say, was bound to me by the ties of hospitality. This Dice (cube) of Hospitality (Tessera Hospitalis) was in common with him and me.

Agorastocles. Therefore thou shalt lodge with me. For I deny neither the rights of hospitality nor Carthage where I was born.¹

The early Christians also had their *Tesseræ*, which they carried about in their journeys from one place to another as a means of introduction to their fellow-Christians whom they might meet. Dr. T. Mason Harris² says that the use of these *Tesseræ* instead of written certificates of character lasted until the 11th century.

Evidently the author of the Mark ritual which we are considering was well acquainted with the nature of these Greek, Roman, and Christian *Tesseræ*, and that they suggested to him the idea of altering the proprietary Mark of the Operative Freemasons, which had given origin to the Mark degree, from a token of ownership in the work of the stone to a badge of fraternity, and a means of claiming brotherly assistance.

During the early part of the 19th century, perhaps much earlier, the ritual was again changed, and that form adopted which being advanced by Thomas Smith Webb³ is now the form universally practiced in America.

The Legend later enters into several details not embraced in the former ones, but it continues to maintain the theory that the Mark is a token of friendship, a theory foreign to the old Operative Freemasons.



¹ Plautus, "Pœnulus," Act V, Scene 2, ver. 80.

² Rev. Thaddeus M. Harris, born 1767, died 1848, Grand Chaplain, also Deputy Grand Master. Edited at Worcester the "Constitutions, History and General Regulations" for his Grand Lodge, Massachusetts, 1792. Also published a book of "Masonic Discourses," 1801.

³ Famous American ritualist, born at Boston, 1771, initiated at Keene, N. H., about 1792, Grand Master of Rhode Island in 1813, died at Cleveland, Ohio, 1819. Active in all branches of Freemasonry his service as a Masonic pioneer teacher and organizer was abounding in devoted seal.

The Legend is to this effect: At the building of the Temple of Solomon, a young Craftsman found in the quarries a stone of a peculiar form and beauty, and on which were inscribed certain mystical characters the meaning of which was wholly unknown to him. Nevertheless, he carried it up to the inspectors of materials brought up for the construction of the Temple, and unsuccessfully attempted to pass it off as a stone wrought by himself. Some time afterwards this very stone, which had been prepared by Hiram Abif for a special purpose in the building, was found to be missing. After a strict search it was discovered among the rubbish and happily used for its original purpose. In honor of Hiram Abif, who had shaped the stone and placed his own mark upon it, a representation of this stone in gold or silver is used as the decoration or badge of the degree; it is worn by Mark Masters, and the traditional Mark of Hiram being a circle of letters, each brother is directed to select his own Mark and place it within the circle. This Mark is inscribed by the Lodge in its register or Book of Marks. The representation of it in metal is often, but not always, nor by any obligation, worn upon the person. It is sometimes used when in distress as a means of obtaining aid and relief.

To be more precise in the description: The American ritual requires the "jewel," as it is called, to be "made of gold or silver," usually of the former metal (sometimes of precious stone, as opal or agate), and in the form of a keystone. On the obverse or front side, the device or Mark selected by the owner must be engraved within a circle composed of the letters H.T.W.S.S.T.K.S. On the reverse surface the name of the owner, of his Chapter, and the date of his advancement to the degree may be inscribed.

In Scotland the usage is a little different. The jewel must be of mother-of-pearl and wedge-shaped. In a circle on one side are the Hebrew letters w n k w k n n; on the other side are letters conveying the same meaning in the vernacular language with the wearer's Mark in the center.¹

With this Legend, as in the preceding one, the Mark has lost the peculiar character it had among the Craft in the Middle Ages. It has become a Masonic decoration and a means of proving the claims of its owner to certain rights due to Mark Masters.



¹ Laws of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland, cap. vii, 4.

However, all the legends agree in one point. Each fixes the time and place of instituting the degree at the building of Solomon's Temple, and they credit the rules then governing it to the wisdom of Hiram Abif, though according to the modern ritual, the circumstances most notable in the ceremony of initiation occurred after the death of that artist.

As the result of our investigation, we are forced to conclude that the Mark degree first appeared in Speculative Freemasonry about the middle of the 18th century. We can find no records in which such a degree is mentioned previous to that period.

A report made to the Grand Lodge of Mark Masons of England in 1873, says, with a great deal more boldness than accuracy, that "there is probably no degree in Freemasonry that can lay claim to greater antiquity than those of Mark Man or Mark Mason and Mark Master Mason." The statement is unfortunate, for it is sadly injurious to the intelligent study of Masonic history, that men otherwise accurate and trustworthy should indulge in such guesses at random. To say nothing of the Fellow-Craft and Master's degrees which precede all illusions to Mark degrees by about half a century, many other degrees were known and practiced at a time when Mark Freemasonry as a Speculative degree or degrees were unknown.

There is little doubt that Scotland was the place where the Mark degree was invented.¹ "It is to Scotland," says Bro. Whytehead (in the letter heretofore cited), "that we must look for the birthplace of the Mark degree as a Speculative working"; and he feels sure that the degree "came into working existence toward the close of the last (the 18th) century, when there was a rage for the multiplication of Orders."

We agree with both of these opinions, except that we should prefer to make the time of birth about the middle, rather than toward the close, of the 18th century. But in either way the difference would not be much more than a score of years.

We must also credit the making of the degree to suggestions from the use of ownership Marks by the Freemasons of Germany,

¹ There are many proofs of the favor shown the system of Marks by Scotch Freemasons through a long period. There is the commission to "enter and pass" brethren issued by the Lodge of Kilwinning to residents in the Canongate, Edinburgh, 1677, and it is noteworthy that a Mark is attached to nearly every signature and in one case, the initials of Andrew Frame, are made into a monogram.



whence they were introduced into Scotland. There they remained long after they had ceased to be used elsewhere.

It has been shown that in Operative Freemasonry the Mark was bestowed upon the Fellow Craft or sometimes upon the Apprentice, without any other known ceremonial than that of a modest banquet in Germany at the expense of the Lodge, and that of a registration of the Mark in Scotland at the expense of the candidate.

However, when the inclination to create a new degree in Speculative Freemasonry took possession of the minds of certain Scottish brethren, the very fact that the Mark was bestowed without any approved ceremonial, inspired the thought that this manifest want of any formality in the bestowal might be well supplied by the making of a degree in which the ceremony could take place.

Whytehead supposes that "it may have even been the case that originally some kind of Mark working, though, of course, not the same as at present, once formed an integral part or complement of the Second degree, just as some Freemasons imagine the Royal Arch did of the Third degree, and that for the sake of abbreviating the ceremonies both were divorced and fashioned into separate and distinct workings under newly invented names." 1

However, the mere fact that there was in Operative Freemasonry a Mark, which every Fellow received upon his admission to the Craft before he went to work as a journeyman, would have been sufficient to suggest to an inventive genius the most fitting points of a new degree, at a time when the making of degrees had become popular and successful in Speculative Freemasonry.

Notwithstanding that the use of proprietary Marks by the German and Scottish Operative Freemasons had furnished the suggestion for the invention of a degree in Speculative Freemasonry the makers of that degree did not strictly preserve the system by which the use of Marks had always been regu-

¹ There have been Bristol (England) Lodges, and the custom doubtless continues, where the Fellow Craft is instructed in the result that is due those claiming wages not earned by them. This lesson is so typical that it has happened that a Senior Deacon during office in his Craft Lodge received the Mark degree elsewhere and then could not repeat his lecture as formerly given the candidates.



lated, which was to afford each stonecutter the means of identifying the stones he had cut.

We need not believe that the Mark was employed actually to give the Overseers and Masters of the works a ready means of calculating the amount of pay due to each workman. Nothing of this is to be found in any of the old statutes or regulations.

Again, the Mark was not placed on all stones. If the calculation of wages was made by the marked stones only, the workmen would be constantly defrauded of a part of their dues.

There was a regulation that those stones only should be marked which were of importance in the building and which required much skill and dexterity in their construction.

The inscribing of a Mark on a well-finished stone was rather intended to secure to the stonecutter a just reputation for his work than to enable an overseer to calculate the amount of wages due.

The Freemasons doubtless placed their Marks upon the stones they cut in the same spirit through which the early printers affixed, each one, a pecular device on the title-pages of the books issued from his press.¹

From what has been said it will be evident that the use of the Mark has been greatly changed by the Speculative Freemasons from that of the Operative Builders, from whom the former derived it.

In one respect the various rituals of Mark Freemasonry agree. They all placed the institution of the system of giving Marks to a portion of the Craft at the time of building King Solomon's Temple, and the Legend connects them with Hiram Abif, whose supposed personal Mark, surrounding that of the wearer, forms the badge of the degree of Mark Master according to the modern ritual.

This story of the Temple origin of the Mark degree is a myth, having no more foundation than the Hiramic Legend of the Third degree. Its adoption in the Mark Master's degree, however, is proof that that degree in Speculative Freemasonry was made after the invention of the Third degree, in the early 18th century.

¹ Some of these old printers' devices bear a very striking resemblance to the stonecutters' Marks. That resembling an inverted 4 is very common to both. See Fosbrook's "Encyclopsedia of Antiquities," p. 445, or the title-page of any old book.



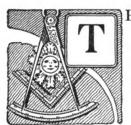
In conclusion, as it has been shown that the Mark of the Modern Speculative Freemason was suggested by that of the German and especially the Scottish Operative Freemasons, and as the employment of Marks by the latter suggested their adoption by the Mark Masters when making their degree, so we may repeat that there is no stronger or more convincing proof of the connection between the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages and the Speculative Freemasons of the present day, and of the direct descent of the latter from the former, than that furnished by the Mark Master's degree.

Still the present Mark degree, even if it has no great age in that form as Bro. Mackey claimed, yet it has historical value as a factor in determining the true origin of the Speculative system, no investigation of which could be correctly conducted without a due consideration of the modern Mark degree.



CHAPTER SEVENTY

THE CHANGE FROM OPERATIVE TO SPECULATIVE FREEMASONRY



HE history of the institution of Freemasonry is naturally divided into two distinct yet closely connected periods. The first period embraces the history of Operative Freemasonry; the second that of Speculative Freemasonry.

But the first of these periods did not pass at once and, as it were, by a leap into

the second. The change which took place was a gradual one. The length of the steps which led from the one to the other was of the shortest. The progress was slow and smooth. The movement was rather one of growth; steady, not sudden.

There was a time when all Freemasonry was purely Operative, and there was a time when it became solely Speculative. We have abundant facts to prove this statement. But it is impossible from any records in our possession to precisely determine and define the date when the change took place.

The naturalist with all the science in his possession is at a loss to determine the precise limits which bound the various kingdoms of nature. The mineral passes by a series of minutest steps the gradation into the vegetable, and the highest species of the vegetable approach and compare with a remarkable likeness of organization to the lowest tribes of the animal kingdom. It requires even in our present advanced state of science the largest amount of professional knowledge and experience to determine in many instances to which division of nature certain specimens rightly belong.

So also in the history of the Masonic institution, there are well-marked eras in its annals when we are at no loss to recognize the distinctive character of its workings. Then again there are points on the extreme limits of its two periods, when the Operative and the Speculative elements are so intimately connected and



clash so confusedly together, like the prismatic colors of the spectrum, that it becomes extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to define any precise line of separation.

Thus we know with certainty that the Freemasonry of the 12th century, which had penetrated every country of the Continent of Europe, was wholly Operative, without a particle of the modern Speculative element in it; we know, too, that the Freemasonry of our own century, which prevails over the whole civilized world, is entirely Speculative and has ceased to have any social connection with the Operative Craft.

But at what precise period the Operative Art ceased to form a part of the institution of Freemasonry, and when the Speculative Science threw off all connection with it, are historical questions which admit hardly of a reasonable guess, certainly not of any positive solution.

A great difficulty which we encounter in the discussion of this subject is that the change from one to the other branch began to assume a distinct form in the several countries at different periods.

Thus, in London, Speculative Freemasonry had taken a distinct and independent form many years before the Lodges of Scotland had divested themselves of the Operative influence. Even in the same kingdom there were English Lodges in the provinces which mingled Operative and Speculative Freemasonry in their work, long after the former system had been wholly abandoned by the Lodges in London.

While it is probable that most readers understand the distinction between Masonry and Freemasonry, it may be well to impress that distinction upon their minds, that during this investigation they may perfectly appreciate the train of reasoning that is pursued.

Masonry is merely the art of building. It has existed from the earliest historic times, when men began to need places of shelter from the inclemency of the seasons, and Masonry must continue to exist so long as they require houses for their habitation. With its history we have no concern.

Freemasonry is the art of building connected in its practical operations with a Gild organization. It was always a Fraternity or Corporation constructed on the plan of a Gild, and



maintaining throughout all its progress that idea derived first from the Roman Colleges of Artificers, until finally it was merged in the non-Operative system of Freemasonry, which exists at the present day and whose history it is the object of the present work to treat.

This distinction, it will be remembered, never ceased to be maintained by the Operative Freemasons, who always held themselves aloof as a higher class from the lower body of "Rough Masons" who were not "Free" of the Gild.

In pursuing our researches into that indefinable period during which the Operative organization was slowly advancing through its transformation into a Speculative Society, it will be necessary that we should first thoroughly understand one of the characteristics which marked the Freemasons of the Middle Ages, and which rendered them unlike every other class of contemporary Craftsmen.

This feature was the admission into their ranks and into full fellowship with them of non-professional persons, whose only claim to a connection with the Craft was derived from their learning, their rank, or their wealth, which gave them the means of elevating the character and promoting the interests of the Fraternity.

We have seen the existence of the same system in the Roman Colleges of Artificers, who strengthened their corporations by the adoption of men of high social rank and political influence as Patrons.

The early Freemasons were patronized by the Church, and were engaged almost wholly in the construction of religious edifices. Hence there was a close and friendly connection between them and the church officials of that period. Lodges were for the most part held in the vicinity and under the patronage of monasteries, and the monks were often architects and builders. At a later period, when the Freemasons became independent of monastic influence, the primitive alliance was not completely dissolved, and the clergy, especially in France, in Germany, and in England, were often admitted, though not professional workers in stone, into the corporation of the Craft. They were among the first of non-masons who received from Operative Lodges the compliment of honorary membership.



The result is seen in the 12th and 13th centuries, when the corporations, not only of Freemasons but of other Crafts, having sought to exercise undue power in the cities, incurred the displeasure of the government. Many bloody contests ensued, with alternating successes for the two parties. But when the Emperors Frederick II. and Henry VII. of Germany sought to end them by abolishing the corporations of workmen, these associations had grown so strong that they were able to successfully resist the Imperial power.¹

Dr. Anderson, in the second edition of the Book of Constitutions, gives repeated instances of bishops, noblemen, and even kings, who were admitted to the privileges of the Craft and exercised authority over the Operative Freemasons as members and patrons of the Gild. But as the accuracy of Anderson as a historian has ceased to be respected through the researches of modern scholars, his authority on this subject need not be pressed. Elias Ashmole however, whose truthfulness and minuteness as an annalist has never been doubted, furnishes unquestioned instances in which he and other gentlemen had been made members of an Operative Lodge in the 17th century. Nor does he speak of these admissions as if they were of unusual occurrence. Indeed, he leads us, by his silence, to the contrary inference.

But it is in the annals of the Lodges of Scotland that we find the most satisfactory history of the rise and progress of the custom of admitting persons who were not Operative Freemasons as members of the Gild. For this we are indebted to the researches of Bro. Murray Lyon, whose History of the Lodge of Edinburgh is of invaluable use to the scholar who is seeking to trace the trustworthy history of Freemasonry outside and independent of its mythical elements. To that work we shall have constant occasion to refer in the course of this part of the present investigation.

¹ Lacroix, "Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance," tome iii, Part I, article 3.



Lyon says that the earliest authentic record of a non-Operative being a member of a Freemasons Lodge is contained in the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh under date of June 8, 1600, where John Boswell, Laird of Auchinleck, a village in East Ayrshire, Scotland, is mentioned among the members of the Lodge.

His name with his Mark is signed to the minutes with the names and Marks of the twelve others who evidently were Operative Freemasons.¹

But twelve years before that, in 1598, we find that William Schaw, who was also a non-Operative,² acted as Master of the Work, and that a year afterward he signed his name to the supplementary statutes issued by him as "Master of the Work, Warden of the Masons."

His predecessor in that office was a nobleman, and in his own time the Wardenship over the Masons in Aberdeen, Banff, and Kincardine was held by a country gentleman, the Laird of Udaught, which shows, say Lyon, "that it was not necessary that either appointment should be held by a Craftsman." But there is just reason for inferring that to hold such offices it was necessary to have honorary membership in the Fraternity.

At a later period in the 17th century the practice of admitting non-Operatives appears to have become common.

In July, 1634, the Lodge of Edinburgh admitted as Fellow Craft the following gentlemen: Lord Alexander, Viscount Canada, Sir Anthony Alexander, and Sir Alexander Strachan. The two first were sons of the Earl of Stirling, and the last was a well-known public man in his time.

"These brethren," says Lyon "seem from their subsequent attendance in the lodge to have felt an interest in its proceedings. In the month immediately succeeding their initiation they were present, and attested the admission of three Operative Apprentices and one Fellow of Craft. They attended three meetings of the lodge in 1635, one in 1636, and one in 1637. In signing the minute of their own reception each appends a Mark to his name." 3



¹ Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 51.

² Lyon believes that there is no proof that he was an Operative Freemason, and goes on to say there can be little doubt that Schaw was an honorary member of the Fraternity. "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 56.

² Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 86.

The reader will note that here as in the case of John Boswell, already mentioned, the Mark is added to the signature of a non-Operative member of the Fraternity. Evidently this is not an instance where the person makes his Mark because unable to write his name. As Bro. Lyon describes the proceedings each personally signed the minutes. We think it reasonable to believe that the minutes signed with the names and recording the Marks served at that time exactly as does the Mark Book of our own day. In that light upon the facts we may conclude that the meaning of the Mark in 1634 was not unlike its modern significance.

Throughout the rest of the 17th century there are repeated records in the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh of the admission of non-Operatives to the rank of Fellow Crafts and sometimes of Masters.

Thus, in 1637, David Ramsay, a "gentleman of the Privy Chamber," was admitted; in 1638, Henry Alexander, another son of the Earl of Stirling; in 1640, General Alexander Hamilton; in 1667, Sir Patrick Hume; and in 1670, the Right Honorable William Murray, son of Lord Balvaird, and Walter Pringle and Sir John Harper, both members of the Scotch Bar.

It is not necessary to cite any more instances to show that in the 17th century the practice existed of admitting non-Operative persons into the brotherhood of the Craft. In the 18th century it had become so common as finally to give to the Speculative element a lead over the Operative in the Fraternity.

The following remarks of Bro. Lyon on the subject of the admission of non-Operatives into the membership of the Craft are of great value in connection with this subject:

"It is worthy of remark that with singularly few exceptions, the non-Operatives who were admitted to Masonic fellowship in the Lodges of Edinburgh and Kilwinning during the 17th century were persons of quality, the most distinguished of whom, as the natural result of its metropolitan position, being made in the former Lodge. Their admission to fellowship in an institution composed of Operative Masons associated together for purposes of their Craft, would in all probability originate in a desire to elevate its position and increase its influence, and once adopted the system would further recommend itself to the Fraternity, by the opportunities which it presented for culti-



vating the friendship and enjoying the society of gentlemen, to whom, in ordinary circumstances, there was little chance of their ever being personally known.

"On the other hand, non-professionals connecting themselves with the Lodge by the ties of membership would, we believe, be actuated partly by a disposition to reciprocate the feelings which had prompted the bestowal of the fellowship, partly by curiosity to penetrate the arcana of the Craft, and partly by the novelty of the situation as members of a secret society and participants in its ceremonies and festivities." 1

The members thus admitted received various designations, such as "Gentlemen Masons," "Theoretical Masons," "Geomatic Masons," and "Honorary Members." The use of these terms evidently shows that the Working Masons—the "Domatic Masons," as Lyon styles them—recognized that there was a very real difference between the two classes of members. It is well to remember this fact, as it supplies one of the motives for the result which afterwards occurred in the complete separation of the Speculative from the Operative element.

The Scotch Constitutions of 1598 and 1599 were certainly constructed solely for the government of Operative Freemasons. Yet there is no prohibition, express or implied, of the admission of non-Operatives as members of Lodges. The fact that Schaw, the framer of the Constitutions, was himself present at a meeting of the Lodge of Edinburgh, where a non-Operative took a part in the proceedings, shows that he did not view such admissions as illegal innovations on the usages and laws of the Fraternity.



^{1 &}quot;History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 81.

² The words "Domatic," used for an "Operative Mason," and "Geomatic," for a "Theoretic Mason," are found in the work of Bro. Lyon. They are not to be found in the Scottish dictionary of Jamieson, nor in any English dictionary from Phillips to Webster. Neither are they used in any of the old Constitutions, Scotch or English. Lyon derives "Domatic" from the Latin domus, house, and says it means "of or belonging to a house." There is on the English Registry a Domatic Lodge, No. 177, which as recently as 1854, was called the Deomatic Lodge but Bro. Hawkins says was originally known as the Domatic Lodge. Geomatic he derives from the Greek ge, earth or land, and he says "Geomatic Masons" were "landed proprietors or men in some way or other connected with agriculture." The word may be taken from "Geomantic," the art of divination or forecasting future events by means of some aspect of the earth, particularly by observing points or lines on the earth, or on paper, or by figures formed by pebbles or particles of earth thrown down at random on the ground. "Ge" is the Greek for earth, and "Manteia," the Greek for divination. Both "Domatic" and "Geomatic" are to be found in the records of the old Aberdeen Lodge, Scotland, 1755.

The form of initiation or admission must have differed in some respects from that laid down for an Operative Freemason. The presentation of an "Essay" or Master-piece of work, as a trial of skill, must have been omitted in the case of candidates whose previous education and profession had not supplied them with the necessary mechanical knowledge.

"It can not now be ascertained," says Bro. Lyon, "in what respect the ceremonial preceding the admission of theoretical, differed from that observed in the reception of practical Masons; but that there was some difference is certain, from the inability of non-professionals to comply with the tests to which Operatives were subjected ere they could be passed as Fellows of Craft. The former class of entrants would, in all likelihood, be initiated into a knowledge of the legendary history of the Mason Craft, and have the Word and such other secrets communicated to them as was necessary to their recognition as brethren." 1

At first they were not chargeable with admission fees; but in 1727, when an attempt was made to exclude them on account of this exemption, a fee of one guinea (21 shillings) was exacted as entrance money. But this was done at so late a period that we may infer that exemption from fees was the custom with respect to all "Theoretic Masons," while the Lodges were purely Operative in character.

Notwithstanding this exemption, "Theoretic Masons" were qualified to hold the highest office in the Lodge. Lyon says that "for a time the occupancy of the chair alternated between the two grand classes into which its membership was divided. Though to Speculative concurrence the Operative section owed the more frequent possession of the coveted honor."²

In Scotland the Operatives and Speculatives do not appear to have lived always in peace and concord; some jealousy seems to have existed at times, which finally resulted, in the year 1727, in an attempt by the Operatives to exclude "Theoretical" Freemasons from the Lodge. "Exclusion" is the word used by Lyon, by which we suppose he means not only the expulsion of the



¹ Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 82.

² Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 201.

"Theoretic" Freemasons who had already been admitted, but also the stopping for the future of the custom of admitting them.

The attempt did not succeed. Speculative Freemasonry was already controlling the element in the Lodges, which a few years afterwards abandoned in Scotland, as they had long before done in England, their Operative character.

We may admit that the earliest authentic record of the admission of "Gentlemen Masons" into the Lodges of England, or in other words the introduction of the Speculative element, occurred in 1646, when Elias Ashmole, the celebrated antiquary and Colonel Henry Mainwaring were made "Freemasons" in a Lodge at Warrington in Lancashire.

But it does not by any means follow, because this is the first recorded instance, that "Theoretical" Freemasons had not been admitted in England long before that time. The records have not come down to us, because of the loss or disappearance of the ancient minute books of the English Operative Lodges.

"Why," says Bro. W. J. Hughan, "so many minute books are still preserved in Scotland, dating long before the institution of the Grand Lodge, even some from the 17th century, and yet scarcely any are to be found in England, seems inexplicable." 1

We have a right to presume, judging by the customs of the sister kingdom, that the initiation of Ashmole and Mainwaring in 1646 was not the introduction of a new practice, but only the continuation of an old one.

If we have not the names of those gentlemen who had previously been admitted to the fellowship of English Lodges, it is because the records are not extant.

Many brave heroes, says a Roman author, have lived before Agamemnon, but they have died unwept, because there was no poet to sing their deeds.

The same thing may be said of the Corporations and Lodges of France and Germany. Though the records are not extant, we have some evidence that in both of them, as well as in other countries of the Continent, "Theoretical" or Honorary Members were admitted among the Operative Craftsmen.

We may therefore lay it down as an authentic historical statement, which if not supported in other places as in Scotland by

1 "Masonic Sketches and Reprints," p. 19.



"Honorary Member," formerly employed to distinguish a non-Operative from an Operative, are no longer in use. For them has been substituted the word "Speculative." The thing itself was in existence long before the adoption of the word which was to define it.

The first place in which we find the word "Speculative" in connection with Freemasonry is in the Cooke manuscript, whose date is about 1450. In this document it is said that the youngest son of King Athelstan, being a master of the Speculative science of geometry or masonry, added to it by his connection with the Craft of Masons a knowledge of the practical science.1

It must be admitted, as Bro. Cooke says, that "no book or writing so early as this manuscript has yet been discovered in which Speculative Freemasonry is mentioned." It is equally certain that the word appears to have been used in the sense given to it at the present day, and the writer of the manuscript drew a distinction between Practical or Operative and Speculative Freemasonry.

The word, however, is not common in the later Constitutions. We hear of it again in the time of Preston, who is the first to give its definition in these words:

"Masonry passes and is understood under two denominations: it is Operative and Speculative. By the former we allude to



¹ He "lovyd well the sciens of Gemetry and he wyst well that hand craft had the practyke of the sciens of Gemetry so well as masons wherefore he drewe hym to consell and lernyd practyke of that sciens to his speculatyf. For of speculatyfe he was a master and he lovyd well masonry and masons." - Cooke manuscript, lines 615, 626.

² Cooke manuscript, lines 615, 626, note K.

the useful rules of architecture, whence a structure derives figure, strength, and beauty, and whence result a due proportion and just correspondence in all its parts. By the latter we learn to subdue the passions, act upon the square, keep a tongue of good report, maintain secrecy, and practice charity."

The dictionary writers define Speculative as opposed to Practical. Hence, "Speculative Masons," the term used at the present day, is precisely the same as "Theoretic Masons," the term which was applied by the Scotch Freemasons of the 16th and 17th centuries to those persons who were admitted into their Lodges though they had no practical knowledge of the Operative art of building.

In contemplating that period in the history of Freemasonry when the institution was gradually preparing for the important alteration in its organization from an Operative Art to a Speculative Science, which period may be called, borrowing a term from the language of geology, the transition period, we must first properly appreciate what was its real condition just previous to the change.

In the first place, we find that before the present organization of Grand and Subordinate Lodges, the Society was an Operative one whose members were actually engaged in the manual labor of building, as well as in the more intellectual task of applying the principles of architecture or the designing of plans.

But not every man who was engaged in the trade of building or in the handling of stones was a member of this Society or entitled to its privileges. In every country there were two distinct and well-recognized classes of workmen.

In Germany the skilled Craftsman (Werkmann) of the Corporation was distinguished from the Maurer or wall builder, the laboring man who roughly hewed and set stones. The Craftsman, the Stonecutter, was employed in the higher walks of the art. These Craftsmen formed a Fraternity of themselves, and no workman was permitted to work with a Freemason who was not a member, except under special circumstances which were provided for by the regulations. These facts are well authenticated for us in the Strasburg and other German Ordinances.

¹ Preston, "Illustrations of Masonry," 2d edition, p. 19. In later editions he enlarged the discussion without materially changing the sense.



In France, the regulations of Étienne Boileau prescribe a similar difference between the Craftsmen and Stonecutters who were members of the Corporation and those who were not. The former workmen, Freemasons, could employ the latter only as assistants and servants but were forbidden to instruct them in any of the secrets of the mystery or trade.

In Scotland the Craftsmen of the Gild, who were called, certainly as early as the middle of the 17th century, Freemasons, were distinguished from the workers in stone who were not "Free of the Gild," and who were called "Cowans," a term which has been preserved in the ritual of modern Speculative Freemasonry with a similar meaning. With the Cowans the Freemasons were forbidden to work.

In England the distinction was between Masons or Freemasons and "Rough Layers," and the same prohibition as to fellowship in labor prevailed there that existed in other countries.

Though all were Operative workmen and all were engaged in the practical art of building, there was in every country a broad line of separation between the Freemasons who were instructed in the highest principles of the art and the lower class of Stonecutters, who were without any pretension to a knowledge of the sciences of architecture and geometry which were cultivated by the higher class.

"Those only," said the Strasburg builders, with an excusable pride in their high position, "shall be Masters who can design and erect costly edifices and works for the execution of which they are authorized and privileged, nor shall they be compelled to work with any other craftsmen." ²

But this higher class of Freemasons were, as we have already seen, divided also into two classes, the Operative and the non-Operative members of the Gild, Corporation, or Fraternity.

It is not difficult to suppose how this division into two classes originally arose. In the earliest times of the society of Freemasons it was closely connected with and under the patronage of the Church. Among its practical members were often monks who were skilled in the manual labor of the Craft, and the architectural designs for the construction of Cathedrals and Abbeys



¹ See Lyon's "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 79.

^{* &}quot;Strasburg Constitutions," article 2.

were often drawn by bishops or abbots who were well skilled in the theory of architecture. These sometimes from choice and sometimes from necessity, in consequence of the intimate relations they held with it, became members of the Fraternity.

Later, when the Operative Freemasons had released themselves from the rule of their church superiors and had established an independent brotherhood, they found it wise, if not positively necessary, to secure the favor of wealthy nobles, and men of rank and science, who by their social position secured protection to the association and elevated its character.

The same process had occurred in the Roman Colleges of Artificers, from whose peculiar organization the Freemasons had derived the idea of their own.

Thus it happened that the Fraternity of Freemasons consisted, from the very earliest period of its history, of two classes, the Operative Freemasons who did the work, and the Theoretic, or, as we now call them, the Speculative Freemasons.

The word "Speculative," as has been already shown, is of very modern origin. If the single passage in the Cooke manuscript be excepted, it is not favored in any Masonic writing until after the organization of Grand Lodges.

We use it, in the present work, as a mere matter of convenience, because it is most familiar to the general reader as meaning the same as the old word "Theoretic."

Thus there always existed, we may say, from the earliest times, so far as we can trace authentic history, two classes of Freemasons, namely, Operative and Speculative.

The Speculative Freemasons, however, though very definitely distinguished after the separation of the Fraternity from its Church connections, from the Operative, by their want of practical skill, did not form an independent and distinct class.

In the Lodges, into which they were admitted, they mingled with the members on a common footing. We presume that this was the case in all countries; we know that it was so in Scotland. They went through a modified initiation into membership, in which of course the presentation of an Essay, Master-piece, or Chef d'Œuvre, was omitted; they assisted in the admission of new members, they took part in the deliberations of the Society on affairs of business, they voted, and even held office.



Starting with our inquiries from the time when the Fraternity dissolved its connection with the abbeys, where it really played the rôle of a subordinate, we may well suppose that at first the number of these Speculative Freemasons or Honorary Members must have been very small.

But they never could have been an insignificant element. The Operative Freemasons held the ascendency in members, but the Speculative Freemasons must have always exerted a powerful influence by their better culture, their greater wealth, and their higher social position.

These two elements of Freemasonry continued to exist together for a very long period of time. But at length, from causes which must be credited to the increasing power and influence of the Speculative element, as well as to intellectual progress, there came a total and permanent separation of the two elements.

The precise time of this divorce must be placed at the beginning of the 18th century, though it is evident that for some years previously the feeling which eventually led to the separation must have been gradually growing. The men of culture and science who were in constant communion with their Operative associates, were getting dissatisfied with a society of mechanics whose working members had lost much of that skill as architects which had given so bright a reputation to their forerunners of the Middle Ages, and who were now not very much superior to the "Cowans," the "wall builders," and the "Rough Layers" whom these skillful predecessors had so much despised—yes, despised so much that the Freemasons would not work in common with them on the same building.

The first act of separation occurred in England in the year 1717, when the Grand Lodge of "Free and Accepted Masons" was organized, an event that has been very generally designated by Masonic writers by the rather questionable title of the Revival.

This important event was followed nineteen years afterwards by the organization of the Grand Lodge of Scotland with similar methods.

Both of these bodies were formed by Lodges that were Operative, but in each case the Operative character was abandoned, and the Grand Lodges and the Lodges under them became entirely Speculative. That is to say, they ceased to cultivate prac-



tical Freemasonry, and were composed for the most part of members who were totally ignorant of the Mystery or the handicraft of building.

In other countries the process of separation did not take place according to the English and Scottish method. Elsewhere than in those two countries the organization of Freemasonry as it prevailed in the Middle Ages had long ceased to exist.

In France the Corporations des Metiers and in Germany the Hütten had been abolished, though in both countries the Stonemasons still continued to maintain an organization, which, however, was outside of the law, and without legal protection or recognition.

But we must look to England for the real causes of the change from Operative to Speculative Freemasonry, for it was in that country that the change was first developed and brought to a conclusion.



CHAPTER SEVENTY-ONE

THE REMOTE CAUSES OF THE TRANSITION



HE transition from Operative to Speculative Freemasonry was not a spontaneous and sudden act, commencing and completing itself by an instantaneous movement, through which that which was the peculiar characteristic of the institution was at once changed into another and entirely different aspect and

condition of affairs.

On the contrary, the epoch of the change can not be precisely determined within the period of six years at least during which the Speculative Freemasons were engaged in slowly perfecting it. The fortress of Operative Freemasonry, which had derived its strength from its comparative antiquity and from the imperishable labors of the mediæval architects, was not to be taken by storm. It was only by gradual approaches that its strong hold in the Lodges was to be overcome.

We are not to suppose that on that eventful festival of St. John the Baptist, when the members of the Four Old Lodges of the Capital City of England met at the Goose and Gridiron Tavern¹ and elected for the first time a Grand Master to preside in their latest organization, that the special and well-understood design of that meeting was at once to change the entire character of the Fraternity.

The fact is that the beginning of the 18th century was in England, and more especially in London, the age of clubs. We shall soon see how associations of men for all sorts of purposes, but principally for festive and social ones, were established in that city.

¹ An old inn that until 1894 stood in St. Paul's Churchyard, London. Here Lodge of Antiquity, No. 1, met and there was the meeting of the Four Lodges in 1717 that resulted in forming the Grand Lodge of England. The tavern was the home of a musical society whose arms, the Lyre and Swan, were jokingly or mistakenly known as the Goose and Gridiron.



Now the Masonic Lodges, consisting as they did and as they had done for many years past of professional Freemasons and of non-professional gentlemen, and the latter being in the lead, perhaps in numbers, certainly in influence, would seem to have afforded an admirable opportunity, by their union into one body, for the establishment of a club of the very highest rank, one indeed of a rank and prestige very far superior to that of the obscure and often ridiculous groups of that day, such as the "No Nose Club," or the "Ugly Faced Club."

We know that for many years previous to 1717 the Operative Lodges contained many non-Operative or "Gentlemen Masons," and that outside of London and its suburbs this condition lasted for many years afterwards. Yet during all that period we have no record of any attempt on the part of the latter to infuse a Speculative element into those Lodges.

Even the organization of the Grand Lodge on St. John the Baptist's day, 1717, does not seem, if we may judge from the meager details of that event which Anderson has transmitted to us, to have been intended to accomplish at once a total separation of the Speculative from the Operative element. The "Charges of a Freemason," which were adopted in 1718, for the government of the new form of the institution, were only a collection of the old laws which had formerly regulated the Operative Lodges, and were wholly unsuited to a system from which practical building knowledge and handicraft had been removed.

Nor was there any pretense that these were new laws, framed for a new society. It thus was acknowledged that the old Constitutions of the Operative were to be preserved. The change was not to be suddenly effected. Anderson, recording the transactions of 1718, under the Grand Mastership of George Payne, says that "this year several old copies of the Gothic Constitutions were produced and collated."

The preservation and publication of these "Charges" as the standard of Masonic law very clearly show that at that time the thought of a purely Speculative institution, fully dissolved from any association with Operative Freemasonry, had not yet entered the minds of those engaged in the establishment of a Grand Lodge.

¹ Anderson, "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 110.



The most that we can say of their real views at that early period, was that they intended to enforce, with greater rigor, the custom which had long before prevailed, and to interpret with the utmost liberality the standing regulation which admitted persons who were not Freemasons by profession to the privileges of the Society.

Not until 1721, four years after the organization of the Grand Lodge, a set of "General Regulations," which had been compiled by Payne 1 the year before, were adopted, which were applicable to the requirements of a purely Speculative association, in which the Operative element was wholly ignored.

We shall see hereafter, when the early records of the Grand Lodge are brought under review, that though no Operative Freemason was ever elected Grand Master, yet until the year 1723 the brethren of that class were recognized by being chosen to the high office of Grand Warden on several occasions.

After that year, 1723, the Operative Freemasons appear to have retired either voluntarily or involuntarily from all prominence, and probably from all part in the concerns of the Society. The latter had by this time assumed a thoroughly Speculative character; its laws and usages were such as were appropriate to a non-Operative system; and its offices were given only to noblemen, to scholars, and to men of high social standing.

The immediate cause of these changes has with very great certainty been credited to the efforts of three persons — John Theophilus Desaguliers,² a philosopher, James Anderson, a clergyman, and George Payne, an antiquary. Them have we to thank for the influences which gradually but successfully led between the years 1717 and 1723 to the complete separation of the Speculative from the Operative Order, and to the birth of that system which, after many later additions, modifications, and improvements, has been developed into the widely extended Freemasonry of the present day.



¹ George Payne, Grand Master in 1718 and again elected 1720. In 1723 he was Master of Lodge No. 4, now the Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge; Grand Warden in 1724, and active in Masonic affairs until his death, 1757.

² Grand Master, 1719; Deputy Grand Master, 1723-1725, three terms. Born in France, 1683, the son of a protestant clergyman, educated at Oxford. Became a Fellow of the Royal Society, 1714, and noted as a lecturer on experimental philosophy. Chaplain to Prince of Wales whom he initiated. Died, 1744.

But there were other causes in operation which assisted in the accomplishment of those results, in which these celebrated persons played so important a part, and without which their labors would hardly have been successful.

The first and perhaps the most important event which prepared the way for the transition was the decay of architecture in England, where in the 17th century the principles of the Gothic style with all its symbolism began to give way to the corrupt forms of the Renaissance, which was a revival of the Roman style. It was on Gothic architecture that the Freemasons of the Middle Ages had founded that school of symbolism which gave to every stone a living voice, and supported the claim of the Fraternity to the elevated position which it had long held above all other handicrafts.

But when the Craft had abandoned this so long honored art and the Lodges ceased to be, as Lord Lindsay has called them, "Parliaments of Genius," there must have been some, as there are now, who deplored the change from high to low taste, and who were anxious to keep alive, if not the practical part of the art, as it had been pursued by the Gothic Freemasons, at least the spirit of symbolism which had been in mediæval times its principal and peculiar characteristic.

Thus the way was gradually prepared in the 17th century for that spiritualizing of the labors and implements of Operative Freemasonry which resulted finally, after many slow steps, in the formation of the system of purely symbolic Freemasonry which exists at the present day, wholly distinct from the body of working Freemasons.

The science of symbolism had been originally practiced only by the Church and by the Gothic Freemasons. When it had been abandoned in the former by the Reformation and in the latter by the decay of architecture, it was still preserved in some of its forms, not in all its excellence, by the Rosicrucian Society which sprung into existence in the 17th century. Though the mystical association of Rosicrucianism was not, in any way, connected with Freemasonry, it can not be doubted that it played an important part in inspiring many members of the Masonic Lodges of Operative Freemasonry with a renewed taste for the mystical symbolism of their predecessors, which in its progressive



Another important cause is to be found in the intellectual revolution which took place in the 17th century, and toward which the Reformation in religion had contributed essential aid. The writings of Bacon had produced a school of experimental philosophy in England. One result of this was the organization of the Royal Society, in whose bosom a race of thinkers was nursed who, in their search for the attainment of knowledge, were ever ready to convert an art such as Operative Freemasonry into a Speculative Science.

At one time it was a favorite theory with some Masonic historians that the origin of Speculative Freemasonry was to be traced to the Royal Society. Though the theory was not a well-founded one, as has been shown in a preceding part of this work, its very existence proves that that Society must, in an indirect way, have had some influence upon the birth and the growth of the Speculative institution.

It is singularly pertinent to this question that Dr. Desaguliers, to whom, beyond all other men, we must credit the organization of Speculative Freemasonry in England, was a distinguished experimental philosopher of the Baconian school and a Fellow of the Royal Society.

It can not, however, be doubted that the low state of morals, the general depression of learning, and the decay of art, which distinguished the close of the 17th century, had a very unfavorable effect on the character of Operative Freemasonry. So the improvement of the moral and intellectual condition of England, and the cultivation of a refinement in literature and science which sprang up soon after the beginning of the 18th century, must have awakened a new spirit in the thinkers of the age.

Dr. Oliver, in an essay on this subject,¹ credits this revolution principally to the influence of Addison, Steele, and other periodical writers of the day. He quotes the opinion of Foster,² who had said that "it is incredible to conceive the effect these writings have had on the town; . . . they have set all our



¹ Introductory Dissertation on the State of Freemasonry in the 18th century, affixed to his edition of Hutchinson's "Spirit of Masonry," p. 5.

² Essays, in a series of "Letters to a Friend," by John Foster.

wits and men of letters upon a new way of thinking of which they had little or no notion before." Hence Oliver says, "It will not be conceding too much to the influence of these immortal productions, if we admit that the Revival of Freemasonry in 1717 was owing, in a great measure, to their operation on public taste and public morality."

As of the two most important and effective of these periodical essays by Steele and Addison, the *Tatler* was begun in 1709, and the *Spectator* in 1711, while the organization of Speculative Freemasonry has the date of 1717, the inference of Oliver as to their influence will hardly be deemed unsound.

Another cause leading directly to the establishment of Speculative Freemasonry has been adduced by Kloss in his German work on the *History of Freemasonry in France*, which is well worth consideration. He says:

"When Wren had completed the building of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, in 1708, and thus the workmen had no common center remaining, their corporate customs, like those of many other bodies, would, in the course of time, have been lost and wiped away, if the brotherhood had not been sustained as such by the power of that ancient addition—the non-professional members, taken from the various grades of society. The religious contentions, which had prevailed for two centuries, were at last compelled to recede before the spirit of toleration. Hence the necessity of some place of rest, where political discussions could not enter, was the cause and the reason for the formation and adoption of (about the year 1716) an organized system, then first appearing as Freemasonry."²

Of the correctness of two assertions made in this paragraph we have convincing proofs. The decay of the Operative branch of Freemasonry is evident, since, according to Oliver, there were in 1688 only seven Lodges in existence, and of them there were but two that held their meetings regularly.³ There was some improvement at the beginning of the next century, which, however, it would be but fair to say was due to the influence and the energy of the honorary or non-professional members.



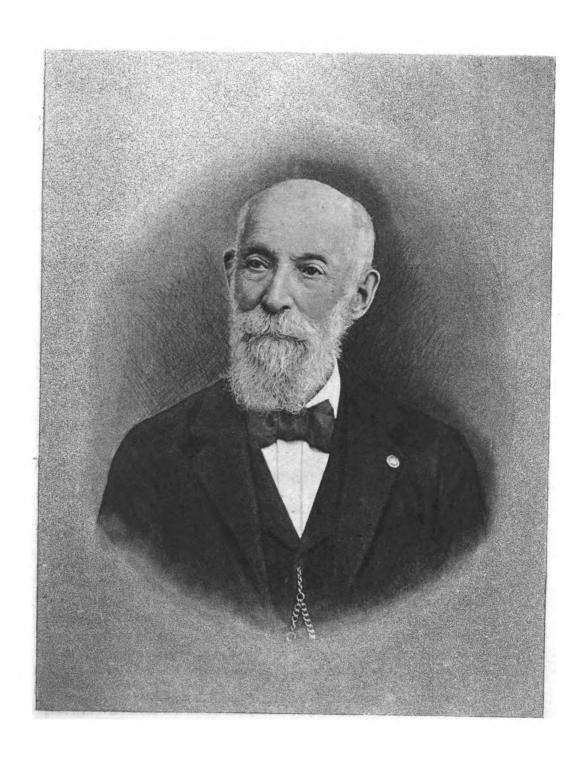
¹ Introductory Dissertation, "Spirit of Masonry," p. 6.

² "Geschichte der Freimaurer in Frankreich," i, 13.

⁸ Introductory Essay on the State of Freemasonry, "Spirit of Masonry."

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In respect to the question of religious toleration, it is very evident that in the matter of a creed there was a very great difference between the two systems, the Operative and the Speculative.

The early Operative Freemasons were, of course, Roman Catholics. After the Reformation in England they became Protestants, but strict followers of the Church. This is apparent from the older and the more recent Constitutions.¹

There was another cause which must have exercised a very potent influence in hastening the establishment of a Grand Lodge of Speculative Freemasonry. This was the universal passion for the formation of clubs which took possession of the English people toward the close of the 17th and at the beginning of the 18th century.

The word Club, as signifying a society or assembly of persons each contributing his share of the expenses, and the members selected by ballot or similarly, came into the English language, as the thing itself did into English social customs, at the period specified. Dryden is the first writer who speaks of political clubs, but the word is in familiar use in the pages of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*.

These new organizations had in a short time become so important as to claim a place in literary history; and in 1709 a work of some magnitude was published in London, entitled The Secret History of Clubs, particularly of the Golden Fleece. With their Original: And the Characters of the most noted Members thereof.²

Dr. Oliver, to whose tireless industry and research (however they were sometimes ill regulated) we are indebted for an admirable Essay on the Usages and Customs of Symbolical Masonry in the 18th Century,³ supplies us with the following information on the subject of Clubs:

"The 18th Century was distinguished by the existence of numerous local institutions, which periodically congregated together different classes of society, for divers purposes, the chief of which appears to have been the amusement of an idle hour,

¹ In the oldest of the Old Constitutions which are extant, the Halliwell or Regius poem, there are directions for hearing Mass.

² We give this title on the authority of Dr. Kloss. It is numbered 237 in his Bibliographie der Freimaurerei, and is said to have extended to 392 octavo pages.

³ Prefixed to the third volume of his "Golden Remains."



when the business of the day was ended. Few of these ephemeral societies aimed at a higher flight. Some met weekly, while the members of others assembled every evening. Each profession and calling had its club, and in large towns the trade of every street was not without its means of thus killing the evening hour.

"Such societies embraced every class of persons, from the noble to the beggar; and whatever might be a man's character or disposition, he would find in London a club that would square with his ideas. If he were a tall man, the tall club was ready to receive him; if short, he would soon find a club of dwarfs; if musically inclined, the harmonic club was at hand; was he fond of late hours, he joined the owl club; if of convivial habits, he would find a free and easy in every street; if warlike, he sought out the lumber troopers; if a buck of the first water, he joined the club of choice spirits; and if sober and quiet, the humdrum. If nature had favored him with a gigantic proboscis, an unsightly protuberance on his shoulders, or any other striking peculiarity, he would have no difficulty in finding a society to keep him in countenance." 1

Before the middle of the century the number of clubs had increased amazingly. Laurence Dermott, Grand Secretary of the "Antients," gives in his *Ahiman Rezon* the names of thirty-eight, besides "many others not worth notice."²

Most of these clubs were of a festive character. There were, however, some whose members aimed at higher pursuits and devoted themselves to the cultivation of art, science, and literature. It must not be forgotten that the Royal Society was originally formed on the pattern of a club.

Dermott mentions a circumstance connected with these clubs which is worthy of notice as showing the popularity of Free-masonry at the time, and the existence then, as at the present day, of societies which sought to imitate its forms, if not always its principles.

"Several of these Clubs or Societies," he says, "have, in imitation of the Freemasons, called their club by the name of



¹ "On the Usages and Customs of Symbolic Masonry in the 18th Century," p. 2. In Dr. Oliver's "Golden Remains."

² "Ahiman Rezon," p. xii.

Lodge, and their president by the title of Grand Master or most noble grand." 1

Addison, speaking in the Spectator of these associations, says: "Man is said to be a social animal, and as an instance of it we may observe that we take all occasions and pretenses of forming ourselves into those little nocturnal assemblies which are commonly known as clubs. When a set of men find themselves to agree in any particular, though ever so trivial, they establish themselves into a kind of fraternity and meet once or twice a week on account of such a fantastic resemblance."²

The presumption will not, then, be a violent one that the first successful effort toward a secession from Operative Free-masonry, must have been stimulated by the practice among men of all classes, in the early part of the 18th century, of starting separate societies or clubs.

A meeting in 1716 consisting of honorary or non-professional members of the London Operative Lodges, being held, too, at a tavern, as was the custom with all clubs, might very properly and with the utmost respect, be looked upon as a club of the highest class. This club of scientific and literary gentlemen who were desirous of separating from the coarser and less intellectual materials which composed the Lodges of practical Freemasons, was not long afterwards, in June, 1717, resolved into a Grand Lodge, the mother of all the Speculative Lodges in the world, Scotland excepted, just as the club of philosophers who first met in the latter part of the preceding century, was finally developed into the Royal Society, the most prominent institution of learning in England.³

That such was the opinion of the learned Dr. Oliver may be justly inferred from the language used by him in his essay On the Usages and the Customs of Symbolical Masonry in the 18th Century. Speaking of the character of the Clubs in which festive sociability appears to have been always carried to an excess, he says:

"There was, however, one Society in that period, which, if it did indulge its members with the enjoyment of decent refresh-



¹ "Ahiman Rezon," see above. ² Spectator, No. IX.

³ From the year 1716, when the Speculative Freemasons first met at the Apple Tree Tavern, until June. 1717, when the Grand Lodge was organized at the Goose and Gridiron, a period of more than six months elapsed. During that time it is not unreasonable to suppose, from the general custom of the day, that the members met under a club organization.

ment, had a standing law which provided against all excess; declaring that 'they ought to be moral men, good husbands, good parents, good sons, and good neighbors, not staying too long from home, and avoiding all excess.' This society was Freemasonry; the exclusive character of which excited the envy of all other periodical assemblies of convivial men."

Five causes appear to have been instrumental in producing that separation of the Speculative from the Operative element in Freemasonry which led to the organization of the Grand Lodge of England and to the establishment of the present system. These, which have been fully treated in the present chapter, may be briefly summarized as follows:

- 1. The gradual decay of Gothic architecture and the abandonment of scientific methods by the Operative Freemasons.
- 2. The intellectual revolution in Europe, which led to the more general cultivation of science and literature.
- 3. The loss of a common center of intercourse which in turn led to a break up of the working organization of the Operative Freemasons in England, after their last great work, the Cathedral of St. Paul's had been finished.
- 4. The growing desire among men of culture and refinement to establish an association from which the spirit of political partisanship and of religious intolerance should be banished.
- 5. And, lastly, the social example given in the beginning of the 18th century by the universal formation of clubs and private societies for all sorts of purposes.

But none of these causes could have been productive of a society of philosophers whose formulas of instruction were derived from the principles of Operative Masonry, had not the way been prepared for the establishment of such a society by relations which had previously existed between the two elements.

To this subject we shall accordingly invite the attention of the reader in the following chapter.

¹ "On Usages and Customs," etc., p. 7.



CHAPTER SEVENTY-TWO

THE WAY PREPARED FOR THE TRANSITION



HE very great change from an Operative Art to a Speculative Science, by which the whole practical craftsmanship character of the former was abandoned and a system of philosophy was established on its basis, could never have been accomplished by any human efforts, if there had not been some previous provision,

which, though undesigned originally for that purpose, rendered the change from the one to the other practicable, if not easy of execution.

In the process of locomotion, the act of removal from one point to another can not be effected unless there be a pathway which will render the removal possible. If there be no pathway, there can be no removal; and the more direct we find the pathway, and the less it is encumbered by obstructions, the more readily will the removal be accomplished.

So in the intellectual changing over of an old society into a new one, it is just as necessary that there should be a way prepared by which the change may be effected. The old society may be of such a nature that it would be impossible to convert it into the contemplated new society. The design and objects of the former might even be such as to be opposed, and thus far from favorable to the transformation.

Thus it would be impossible to convert a Gild of Weavers or of Mercers into an association having the character of a Lodge of Speculative Freemasons. The way is not open to such a conversion. The foundation-stone upon which the system of modern Freemasonry is built must have been a Fraternity of Operative Builders capable and skilled in the working of stone. It is useless to look for it elsewhere, because the symbolism of Freemasonry is derived altogether from the art of architecture.



This is in Bro. Mackey's opinion the best reason that we possess for the rejection of the theory that the origin of Free-masonry is wholly to be sought in the ancient mysteries of Egypt, of Greece, or of Persia. There is no passable way leading from these Mysteries to Speculative Freemasonry. In the secret doctrines and in the usages of these Mysteries we find no reference to architecture. They were simply systems intended to teach in a mystical way what they supposed to be religious truth. Their organization was so different from that on which the Freemasonry of the present day is based, that we can find no road directly connecting the two.

Bro. Mackey also holds that those who have sought to make the Speculative Freemasons the legitimate descendants of the Crusaders and the Knights Templar, must meet with the same difficulty in connecting the two. Military associations could never give rise to sodalities, all of whose principles are those of peace and brotherly love. It would have been utterly impossible to transform a camp of knights in armor, thirsting for the blood of their Saracen foes, into a peaceful Lodge of Freemasons, engaged, as the French song says, in erecting temples for virtue and dungeons for vice.

It is true that at a later period, when Craft Freemasonry was supplied with new rituals and when what are called the "high" degrees were invented, a great deal of dogma was borrowed from, or rather found to be identical as to, the unity of God and the immortality of the soul with those of the ancient Mysteries, and then, and on that account, something like the usages of chivalry was introduced into the developed system of Freemasonry.

But the Speculative Freemasonry which at the beginning of the 18th century was boldly separated from the Operative Freemasonry, within which it had quietly slept, waiting patiently for its time of birth, knew nothing—recognized nothing—imitated nothing of the Mysteries of Osiris, of Dionysus, or of Mithras, and cared still less for the daring deeds of the warriors of Palestine.

In 1716, when the resolve was first made to separate Speculative from Operative Freemasonry, and in 1717, when that resolve was carried into effect by the organization of the Grand Lodge of England, those who undertook the enterprise, looked only to



the customs and principles of the English Stonemasons for the pattern on which they were to construct the new edifice in which they were thereafter to dwell. Hence it is that the pure, Speculative Freemasonry at its origin borrowed and spiritualized, not the sacred baskets and phallic emblems of the Mysteries, nor the glittering swords and invincible armor of the Crusaders, but the working tools and professional phrases of the sodality of builders whence they sprang.

They even, in deference to and in memorial of their descent, preserved the name of the association to which they thus unequivocally ascribed their origin.

They did not profess to be Free Mystagogues or Hierophants, nor Free Knights, but simply, as they then spelt the word, Free Masons, Builders Free of the Gild, who still continued to build. They only changed from the material cathedral, where God was to be worshipped in all the splendor of art, to the spiritual temple of the heart, where the same worship was to be continued in purity and truth.

It is true that we thus materially abridge the pretensions of the institution to a profound antiquity. But unfounded claims never win honor or respect from the honest inquirer. If we were disposed to treat the rise and progress of Freemasonry as a romance we might indulge the imagination in its wildest flights, with no other object than to make the narrative interesting. But as the purpose is to write a history, we must confine ourselves to authenticated facts, and take the result, whatever it may be, without reservation.

Accepting, then, as true the theory that the Freemasons who commenced the organization of the Speculative system in the year 1716 at the Apple Tree Tavern in London, and afterward completed it in 1717 at the Goose and Gridiron, framed their association after the model of the Stonemasons of the Middle Ages, whose Fraternity was still preserved, though in a less perfect form, in the Four Operative Lodges of London, we must inquire what were the circumstances that prepared the founders of the new Order which they were instituting for this transition from an Operative Art to a purely Speculative Science? We must go over the road which they trod in making the change from one system to the other.



If we carefully inspect the organizations of the two associations, we will observe that while between them are some very important differences, there were, on the other hand, some equally important resemblances.

The differences present that well-marked line of cleavage which gave to each an independent individuality. They show that there have been two very distinct Fraternities, while the resemblances between the two, directly considered, show also, the dependence of one upon the other and the relation that existed between them.

The differences between them were only three, and were as follows:

1. The mediæval Freemasons were exclusively a body of Operative builders. They admitted, it is true, as honorary members a class of persons who were not stonemasons by profession. This did not, however, in the slightest degree affect the purely Operative character of the institution.

The modern Speculative Freemasons are not Operative builders. No member is necessarily a stonemason. Stonemasons, it is true, are admitted into the Brotherhood, just as persons of any other Craft may be if physically, morally, and intellectually qualified.

2. The mediæval Freemasons constituted a Gild which was restricted to men of one peculiar handicraft. No one could be admitted into the Gild except the Honorary Members, or "Theoretic Masons," as they were sometimes called, unless he had served a long apprenticeship to the mystery, extending from one to seven years.

The Speculative Freemasons have no such provision in their Constitution. Although they derive their existence from an association of Stonemasons, and though they preserve much of the language and use all the implements of Operative Freemasonry in their own association, yet men of every craft and profession, and men without either, are freely admitted, without distinction into their Brotherhood.

3. Another difference is in the religious character of the two associations. The difference is a very important one, and has already been assigned as one of the causes that led to the separation.



The mediæval Freemasons were at first Roman Catholics, and afterward, when the Reformation had gained a foothold, and become the religion of the country in which they resided, the Freemasons professed to be Protestants, but in all their regulations a strict allegiance to the Church was required. The mediæval Operative Freemasons all professed and maintained the Christian religion.

But one of the first acts of the Speculative Freemasons after their organization was to establish a system of toleration in respect to religious doctrines. The Freemason was required to be of "that religion in which all men agree." Consequently atheists only were shut out from admission to the Brotherhood. In Speculative Freemasonry every member is permitted to enjoy his own peculiar views on religious matters, provided that he does not deny the existence of a personal God and of a future life.

These are the essential differences which exist between the two associations. To counterbalance them, there are several very important and significant resemblances. These are as follows:

1. Both systems had some form of initiation into the Brother-hood, and certain methods of recognition by which one member could make himself known to another. These forms and methods were exceedingly simple in the older Fraternity, and varied then as they do now in different countries. They afforded only the germ from which in the newer Fraternity was developed, by slow steps, the full fruit of a perfect form of initiation and more complicated methods of recognition.

It must be very evident that when the first movement was inaugurated toward the separation of the Speculative from the Operative element, the existence in the latter of a form of initiation and modes of recognition, however simple they may have been, must have suggested the policy of continuing, and as the organization became more mature, of improving them.

That the Modern Order of Free and Accepted Masons is a secret society, in the meaning usually but not accurately credited to that phrase, arises from the fact that the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages were of the same character. Of the



fact that the Operative Freemasons were a secret association there is not the least doubt.¹

If the Operative Masons had not practiced these forms and methods, we may safely infer that nothing of that nature would have been adopted by the Speculative Freemasons. No other of the clubs or societies which at that day were springing abundantly into existence had adopted any such methods of organization until a few of them, which were established after the year 1717, such as the Gormagons, followed the example of the Freemasons.²

These forms were peculiar to the Operative Freemasons, and that they were adopted by the Speculatives is one of the strongest proofs that could be presented that the latter are the direct descendants of the former.

2. Both the Operative and Speculative Freemasons held Geometry in the greatest esteem as being the most important of the sciences. Indeed, in the Old Constitutions, and in monitorial instructions, the words were held to be synonymous. The secrets of the mediæval architects are admitted to have been geometrical, that is, they consisted in an application of the principles of geometry to the art of building.

Paley, in a sentence that has heretofore been quoted, says that "It is certain that geometry lent its aid in the planning and designing of buildings... which were evidently profound secrets in the keeping of the Freemasons." **

When Speculative Freemasonry arose out of the declining condition of the Operative system,⁴ this respect for geometry was

- 1 "So studiously did they conceal their secrets," says Halliwell, "that it may be fairly questioned whether even some of those who were admitted into the Society of the (Operative) Freemasons were wholly skilled in all the mysterious portions of the art." "Archæologia," vol. xxviii, p. 445.
- ² A rival society to the Freemasons dating from 1724 at London. See article on the Duke of Wharton, by Robert F. Gould, in "Ars Quatuor Coronatorum," vol. viii.
 - ² "Manual of Gothic Architecture."
- 4 When an allusion is made to the "decline" of Operative Freemasonry, it must be understood that the reference is to that system of elevated art which was founded and practiced by the Freemasons of the Middle Ages. Pure Masonry, or the mere art of building, is so necessary to the wants of man, that it must flourish in every civilized Society. But there is the same difference between Operative Freemasonry and Operative Architecture as there is between the gorgeous Cathedral erected for God's worship and the unassuming house built for man's dwelling. That Freemasonry in the sense here given was in a declining condition and had "fallen from its high estate" at the close of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, is agreed by all architectural historians.



retained as the basis of the symbolic science, as it had been of the building art. "Right angles, horizontals, and perpendiculars," which had been applied to the construction of edifices, received now a spiritual signification as symbols. But seven years after the organization of Speculative Freemasonry, we find the "Free Masons' Signs" depicted in the oldest exposé ritual extant 1 as acute, obtuse, and right angles. The equilateral triangle which Palfrey says was probably the basis of most of the working formations of the Operative Freemasons has become the most sacred of the symbols of their Speculative descendants.

In fact, all the geometrical symbols (and there are very few others) which are found in the rituals of modern Freemasonry, such as the triangle, the square, the right angle, and the forty-seventh problem of Euclid may be considered as the débris, the mere fragments of what has been called the "lost secrets" of the old Freemasons. As these founded their art on the application of the principles of Geometry to building, declaring in their esteem for the science that "there is no handicraft that is wrought by man's hand but it is wrought by Geometry," so the Speculative Freemasons, imitating them in that veneration, have drawn from it their most important symbols and announced it in all their rituals to be "the first and noblest of the sciences, and the basis on which the superstructure of Freemasonry is founded."

Of the various links of the chain which connects the Operative Freemasonry of the Middle Ages with the Speculative system of the present times, there is no stronger one than this common cultivation of the science of Geometry by both—in the one, as the aid to a style of architecture; in the other, as the foundation of a profound system of symbolism.

Moreover, it supplies an unanswerable objection to the theory which seeks to deduce Freemasonry from the Ancient Mysteries. Between the two this common bond is wanting. The Hierophants of Egypt, of Greece, and of Persia presented no geometric teachings in their religious systems, and a modern mystical association which was derived from the Osirian, the Dionysiac, or the Mithraic secret culture, would have been as devoid as its original to any allusions to the science of Geometry.

¹ "The Grand Mystery Discovered," London, 1724.



3. A third point of resemblance is that both the Operative and the Speculative Freemasons cultivated the science of symbolism as an important part of their systems.

There is no one of the resemblances between the mediæval and the modern Freemasons which is so full of suggestion as to the descent of the one from the other, as is the existence of this fact that a science of symbolism was common to both.

That the Freemasons of the Middle Ages cultivated with choice taste and skill the science of symbolism and infused its principles in all their works, is an authentic fact of history which admits of no denial. The proofs of this are at hand, and if it were necessary might be readily produced.

Findel, whose skepticism as a historian never permits him to accept conclusions without a careful investigation, has contributed his authority to the statement that the German Stonemasons made abundant use of symbols in the practice of their art.

According to him the implements, and especially the compasses, the square, the gavel, and the foot-rule were peculiar and expressive symbols. Other crafts may have symbolized the instruments of their trade, but the Freemasons, above all others, "had special reason to invest them with a far higher value and to associate them with a spiritual meaning; for it was a holy vocation to which they had devoted themselves. By the erection of a house to God's service, the Master Mason not only perpetuated his own name, but contributed to the glory of the greatest of all Beings by spreading the knowledge of Christianity and by inciting to the practice of Christian virtue and piety."

But it was not to the mere implements of their work that they confined this principle of symbolization. They extended it to the work itself, and every church and cathedral erected by Gothic art is full of the symbolism of architecture. "On all the buildings erected by them," says Findel, "are to be found intimations of their secret brotherhood and of the symbols known to them."

Michelet, the historian of France, always eloquent and flowery, becomes especially so when he is referring to the architectural symbolism of the Old Freemasons.

¹ Findel, "Geschichte," in Lyon's Translation, p. 68.



According to him the church, as erected in all the significance of its architectural symbols, is not a mere building of stones, but the material presentation of the Christian drama. "It is," he exclaims, in the fervor of his admiration, "a petrified Mystery, a Passion in stone, or rather the Sufferer himself. The whole edifice, in the austerity of its geometrical architecture, is a living body, a Man. The nave, extending its two arms, is the Man on the cross; the crypt, or subterranean church, is the Man in the tomb; the spire is still the same Man, but above, ascending to heaven; while in the choir obliquely inclining in respect to the nave you see his head bent in agony."

Now this science of symbolism so earnestly and so gracefully cultivated by the mediæval Freemasons was handed down, like an heirloom, to their modern successors, who in slow process of time developed it into the beautiful system which now forms the vital strength of Speculative Freemasonry.

One of the legal and accepted definitions of modern Freemasonry is that it is "a system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." As the architecture of the old Freemasons differed from all other architecture in the symbolism which it impressed on every stone, so the morality of the modern Freemasons differs from every other code in the symbolism with which it clothes its instructions.

But in all fairness it must be confessed that the mere fact that the science of symbolism has been cultivated both by the Operative and Speculative Freemasons furnishes no satisfactory evidence that the one has been derived from the other.

Symbolism was the very earliest method by which men sought to convey religious thought. It is believed, with some show of probability, that it existed even in prehistoric times. It was common to all nations, and exercised its influence even in the construction of language, for words are merely the symbols of ideas.

The Phallic, supposed to be the most ancient of all worships, was preëminently a religion of symbolism.³ Much of that symbolism is retained in modern customs and religious observances, though its origin has been forgotten and its application perverted.

- ¹ Michelet, "Histoire de France," liv. iv, ch. ix, p. 364.
- ² English Lectures of Dr. Hemming, adopted by the Grand Lodge of England.
- ³ Phallism, worship of the generative powers of nature.



Nearly all the ancient schools were secret, like that of Pythagoras, and clothed their lessons of wisdom with the covering of symbolism. As with the philosophical, so was it with the religious sects called the Mysteries. Their secret dogmas were concealed beneath symbols and allegories.

It is evident, then, that in regard to the single point of symbolism, the modern Freemasons might as well have derived their symbolic usages from the ancient institutions of philosophy or of religion as from the mediæval builders.

But the symbols which were adopted by the modern Freemasons, in the beginning of the 18th century, under their Speculative system, were all based on geometry and on architecture and on its implements.

Now the symbols of the old Operative Freemasons were of precisely the same character. Geometry and architecture were the foundation of both of them.

But the Hierophants and mystagogues, priests and explainers of the Pagan mysteries employed, in the illustration of their doctrines, symbols, like the phallus, or the serpent, that had no connection whatsoever with the art of building or with the science of mathematics. It is evident that the Speculative Freemasons, when they were instituting their new society as "a system of morality which was to be illustrated by symbols," could not have derived any suggestions from the Pagan mysteries.

The winged globe or the handled cross of the Egyptians, the mystic basket of Eleusis, and the bleeding bull of the rites of Mithras found no place as symbols in the system of the first Speculative Freemasons.

It is true that at a later period, and especially after the invention of what are called the "high degrees," the original ritual was supplemented by the addition of many symbols culled from these ancient sources.

Among the Operative Freemasons there were also a few symbols which were not connected with Geometry or Architecture, which were, it is supposed, borrowed from the Gnostics, with whom these old builders appear to have had some intercourse. But these symbols were chiefly confined to the proprietary marks, and consequently never were incorporated into the ritual of the Speculatives.



But the Society which in 1716 seceded or separated from the Operative Lodges of London, and in less than a year after organized the "Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons," when adopting its unimposing ritual, gave the most ample testimony in its construction of the unmixed influence of an association of builders. The symbolism employed in the beginning by the Speculative Freemasons therefore furnished all the evidence that is necessary, if no other were forthcoming, of their direct descent from the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages.

4. A fourth resemblance between the two associations is found in the fact that both were divided into three classes, bearing the same name, namely, Masters, Fellows, and Apprentices.

In the Operative system these were mere ranks or classes, which do not appear, from any evidence we possess, to have any distinct form of initiation or methods of recognition by which the classes were esoterically separated from each other. In other words, there was no such thing as a series of degrees, as that term is now masonically understood, but only one degree or form of initiation common to all—to the Apprentice as well as to the Master.

This was precisely the system adopted by the Speculative Freemasons at the outspring of the separation. For at least three years they pursued the old Operative method, and had but one esoteric form of admission for all their members. The making of the three degrees was an afterthought, which did not take place until at least the year 1720.

Bro. W. J. Hughan, who on this subject will be willingly recognized as of the highest authority, has made this positive statement on the subject:

"The reference to Masonic degrees (as we understand the term now) never occurs in the ancient minutes, no rituals of degrees prior to 1720 are in existence; and whatever esoteric customs may have been communicated to Craftsmen before the last century, they do not appear to have necessitated the temporary absence of either class of members from the lodge."

But as this has long been and even now is a mooted question among Masonic scholars, a very few inclining to give to the series of Craft degrees a greater antiquity than they seem to deserve,

¹ In a letter in the London Freemason for June 27, 1874.



the subject will be discussed in all its bearings in a future chapter of this work, when the judgment expressed by Bro. Hughan will be examined in the light of the clearest historical evidence.

In respect to the inquiry which we are now pursuing, the decision of the question is unimportant. For whether we consider that the Masters, Fellows, and Apprentices represented three degrees of esoteric Freemasonry or only three classes of workmen, there is no doubt that the Speculative Freemasons derived the idea of such a division from the Operatives. They could not have got it from any of the religious or philosophic systems of antiquity. They could not have found it in the Mysteries of Osiris nor in the school of Pythagoras, in neither of which does any such division occur.

Whatever changes the Speculatives may have made after their organization by making over what were classes in the Operative system into degrees, the change could not destroy the evidence that the former was the successor of the latter, and could have an origin only in an association of Craftsmen to whom such a division into classes or ranks of workmen was common and necessary.

5. Another resemblance is found in the common reference of both to the Temple of Solomon as a pattern or type on which much of their symbolism has been founded.

We do not intend to maintain the theory that the institution of Freemasonry has descended from the Tyrian and Jewish builders at the Temple erected by King Solomon. That has already engaged our attention in a preceding part of this work, and we have sought, we hope successfully, to show that the Solomonic legend as it has been formulated in the Third Degree of our modern Freemasonry, though accepted in the Lodge rituals, is a mere myth or supposition without historical authority to sustain it.

Yet as a part of the great Legend of the Craft, the connection of King Solomon's Temple with the supposed history of Free-masonry was not unknown to the Operative Freemasons of at least the 15th and succeeding centuries, since they were familiar with the Old Constitutions in which this Legend was embodied.

Notwithstanding that the details of the construction of this Temple by the Jewish and Tyrian Freemasons, contained in the Legend of the Craft, are very brief, these details, unsatisfactory



as they are, were enough to inspire the Freemasons of the Middle Ages with the belief that the building had been erected by the aid of their predecessors. Hence their Master Builders preserved a reverential reference to it in many of their architectural symbols.

But there is no evidence that the Hiramic legend, such as is met with in the modern Lodges, was ever known to the architects of the Middle Ages.

Still, the history of the Temple, inaccurately as it was given in the *Legend*, was accepted by these builders as a part of the history of the Craft, and the building of the magnificent structure was esteemed by them as one of the most glorious works of the ancient Brotherhood.

From the Operative Freemasons the Temple idea passed over to their Speculative successors. From no other source could the latter have derived it. Its presence among them, coupled with the other resemblances, especially that of the divison into three classes, is a most convincing proof of the intimate connection of the two associations.

The founders of Speculative Freemasonry found the simple Legend of the Craft ready at hand. They adopted it — incorporated it into their new association — and in a short time, with great ingenuity, developed it into the beautiful and impressive allegory of the Third Degree.

6. A very significant resemblance between the Operative and the Speculative Freemasons is shown in the fact that all the written laws and usages of the latter are founded upon those which were enacted for the government of the former.

The oldest code of laws for the government of Speculative Freemasons is that contained in the document entitled "The Charges of a Free-Mason," which were adopted in 1722 by the Grand Lodge and published in the first edition of the *Book of Constitutions*. In this edition it is said that they have been "extracted from the ancient records of Lodges beyond sea and of those in England, Scotland, and Ireland for the use of the Lodges in London." 1

¹The "Charges" printed in the 2d or 1738 edition of the Constitutions are of little or no value as an exponent of the common law of Freemasonry, as they were unauthoritatively altered in many important respects by Dr. Anderson. But as a historical document it is worthy of consideration, as it shows the gradual outgrowth of the Speculative from the Operative system and indicates the mode in which the laws were modified in order to accommodate the application of the old laws to the new association.



The Statutes which governed the Operative Freemasons are contained in the old manuscript Constitutions, which range in date from the end of the 13th to the beginning of the 18th century. The regulations which they contain are wholly unfit for the government of a non-Operative society.

Still, as the Speculative was founded upon the Operative association, and was only a development of the principles of the latter in an application of them to moral and philosophical purposes, the laws of the Operative Society were largely made use of by the Speculative Fraternity in the construction of their new code.

It is true that the Statutes contained in the manuscript Constitutions have not, with a few exceptions, been copied word for word in the "Charges" adopted for the regulation of the newly born Brotherhood. This was hardly to be expected. That which is justly appropriate for a mechanic pursuing a mechanical occupation, would be very absurd and out of place when applied to a philosopher engaged in a philosophical inquiry.

Still, the spirit of the old laws has been rigidly observed. There is not a regulation in the "Charges" adopted in 1722 which does not find an analogy in the Constitutions of the Operative Craft contained in the old manuscript records, beginning, so far as we have any trace of them, with the Constitutions of the Art of Geometry according to Euclid, which was written, it is supposed, in the year 1390, and which was in all probability a copy of some older manuscript, now, perhaps, lost beyond hope of recovery. The old law has been retained, but in its spirit and application there has been a material change.

Thus, by way of example, we find in the "Charges" of 1722 the following clause:

"No Master shall give more wages to any Brother or Apprentice than he may deserve."

Now this most certainly could not have meant that in a Lodge of Speculative Freemasons the Master should not pay more than a certain justly earned amount of wages to an Entered Apprentice. In 1722, when this regulation was adopted, the Masters of Lodges did not pay wages, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, to any of the members.

The French Freemasons have retained the use of this word in their technical language, and show us very clearly what mean-



ing was intended to be conveyed by these "Charges," when they spoke of paying a Speculative Freemason his wages.

What the English and American Freemasons call "advancement from a lower to a higher degree," the French Freemasons designate by the expression "increase of wages." When we say that an Entered Apprentice has been advanced to the degree of Fellow Craft, the French express the same fact by stating that the Apprentice has received an increase of wages.

This, then, is the idea intended to be conveyed in that clause of the "Charges" of 1722 which has just been quoted. Translated into the language of the present day, we find it in that law which exists in all Masonic jurisdictions and under the sanction of all Grand Lodges, that no member shall be advanced to a higher degree until he has shown suitable proficiency in the preceding one.

Now this law of Speculative Freemasonry has been derived from and finds its analogy in the Old Constitutions of the Operative Freemasons, where the following law is extant:

"Every Master shall give pay to his Fellows and servants as they may deserve, so that he be not defamed with false working." 1

It is very manifest that here the literal meaning of the law as it was applicable to Operative Freemasonry has been abandoned, but the spirit has been preserved in a symbolical interpretation.

Again, in the "Charges," adopted by the Speculatives in 1722, the following regulation will be found:

"None shall discover envy at the prosperity of a Brother nor supplant him, nor put him out of his work if he be capable to finish the same; for no man can finish another's work so much to the Lord's profit, unless he be thoroughly acquainted with the design and draughts (working drawings) of him that began it."

No one, on the mere reading of this regulation, can hesitate to believe that it must have been originally intended for the government of working Craftsmen, and that the Speculative Masons must have derived it from them.

Accordingly, if we look into the old Constitutions of the Operative Freemasons we shall find the same law, though not expressed in identical words. The Operative law is thus stated in the Sloane manuscript, whose date is about 1646:



¹ Lansdowne manuscript, year 1600.

"Noe Maister nor Fellowe shall supplant others of there worke (that is to say); if he have taken a worke, or stand Maister of a Lord's work, you shall not put him out of it; if hee bee able of cunning to performe the same."

Now we can very easily understand the meaning of this last regulation as applied to an association or Fraternity of working builders. It was intended to prevent the unfair interference of one Operative Freemason with another, by seeking to wrest employment from him in sly and underhanded ways. That act is not, even at this day, considered by Craftsmen to be honorable, though not forbidden, as it was to the old Freemasons, by an express statute.

But what can be the meaning of such a law when applied, as it is in the "Charges" of 1722, to Speculative Freemasons? They have no "Lord's work" to do, in which they might be supplanted by a rival Craftsman.

If the literal meaning of the law were to be accepted, we should verify the truth of Scripture that it is the letter which killeth. But if we apply the symbolic interpretation, which must have been the one given to it by the Speculative Freemasons, we shall find that the spirit of the old Operative regulations is still preserved and obeyed by all the Grand Lodges in the world. It is in fact the very law that applies to and is the foundation of the well-known and often discussed doctrine of Masonic jurisdiction.

The law as it is now understood is that no Lodge shall interfere with another Lodge in conferring degrees on a candidate; that when he has received the First degree in any Lodge, he becomes, Masonically, the work of that Lodge and must there receive the rest of the degrees. No other Lodge shall be permitted to supplant it, or to take the finishing of that work out of its hands. The Apprentice must be passed and raised in the Lodge wherein he was initiated.

Thus the law of Speculative Freemasonry which is everywhere accepted by the Craft as the rule of courtesy for the government of Lodges in their relation to each other, was evidently founded on the principles of Operative Freemasonry, taken, in fact, from the law of that older branch of the institution and, as it were, spiritualized in its practical application to the government of the Speculative branch of our Fraternity.



Viewed in their literal meaning, it is very evident that the whole of the "Charges" adopted in the year 1722 by the Grand Lodge of England, just after its severance from the Operative Lodges, are laws which must have been intended for an association of working Freemasons.

They were the Statutes of an Operative Gild, and were adopted in the bulk by the Speculative Freemasons at the time of the separation, to be subsequently and gradually interpreted in their meaning and modified in their purpose to suit the Speculative idea.

Other points of difference and other points of resemblance might be found on a more minute investigation, but the connection between the two branches has been sufficiently shown.

The differences have enabled us to give to each association a personality and an individuality which manifestly separate the one from the other. The Gild of Operative and the Gild of Speculative Freemasons were and are entirely distinct, in their character and design. The parent and the child are not the same, though there will be resemblances which indicate the relationship.

Now the resemblances which have been described as existing between the two Fraternities, while they paved the way for the easy outgrowth of the one from the other, furnish also the most incontestable evidence of the influence that was exerted by the Gild of mediæval Freemasons on the organization of the Speculative Freemasons who sprang into existence in England at the beginning of the 18th century. To use a Darwinian phrase, the change might be said to have been produced by a sort of evolution.

In other words, if there had been no Gilds of Operative Freemasons, such as history paints them, from the 10th to the 17th centuries there would have been no Lodges of Speculative Freemasons in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Thus we establish the truth of the hypothesis which it has been the object of this work to maintain, that the Freemasonry of the present day is derived solely, in its primitive organization, from the Building Corporations of the Middle Ages; and that its rites, its doctrines, and its laws have suffered no modification except that which naturally resulted from a change of character when the Operative Fraternity became a Speculative one.

This is about the sum and substance and the true solution of the historical problem which refers to the connection of the



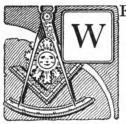
Speculative with the Operative association; of the Freemasons of to-day with the Freemasons who came from Lombardy and who flourished in the Middle Ages; of the men whose Lodges have now passed into every country where civilization has extended, and everywhere exerted a powerful moral influence, with the men who erected splendid monuments of their artistic skill at Magdeburg, and Strasburg, and Cologne, at Canterbury and York, at Kilwinning and Melrose.

Our attention must next be directed to the historical events that took place immediately after the separation in England, and afterwards in Scotland and in other countries—events which make up the story of the rise and progress of Speculative Freemasonry.



CHAPTER SEVENTY-THREE

ORGANIZATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND



E have now reached the most interesting portion of the history of Freemasonry. We are getting away from the regions of legend and tradition, and are passing into the realm of reliable records. Though at this early period there is a scarcity of these records, and sometimes a doubtfulness about their meaning,

which will occasionally compel us to build our theories on the foundation of sound belief and surmise, still, to whatever conclusions we may come, they will, of course, be more satisfactory to the mind than if they were wrought out of mere mythical and traditionary tales.

It has already been shown that the Gild or Fraternity of Freemasons from the earliest period of its history had admitted into its connection persons of rank and influence who were not workmen of the Craft.

This practice followed the example of the Roman Colleges of Artificers, whose patrons were selected from such influential persons in the community as to secure to the corporations a protection often needed, from unfriendly interference of the government.

Thus, when after the decay of the Roman Empire, architecture, which had fallen into decline, began to revive, the Freemasons were employed in the construction of religious edifices, and the officials of the Church naturally became closely connected with the workmen, while many of the monks were Operative Craftsmen. Bishops and abbots superintended the buildings, and were thus closely connected with the Gild.

This custom continued even after the Freemasons had withdrawn from all dependence on the Church, and up to the 18th century non-Operatives were admitted into full membership of



the Fraternity, under the title of Gentlemen or "Theoretic Masons," or as Honorary Members. The title of Speculative Freemasons was a term of later coinage, though it is met with, apparently with the same meaning, in one of the oldest records, the Cooke manuscript. But this is a solitary instance, and the word never came into general use until some time after the organization of the Grand Lodge in 1717.

The expression is here used for the sake of convenience, in reference to the early period, but without any intention to intimate that it was then familiar to the Craft. The fact existed, however, though the special term was apparently wanting.

The natural result of this mingling of Operative and Speculative Freemasons in the same Fraternity was to beget a spirit of rivalry between the two classes. This ended in the breaking up of the Gild of Operative Freemasons as distinguished from the Rough Masons or Rough Layers, and the establishment on its ruin of the Society of Speculative Freemasons, which at London, in the year 1717, assumed the title of "The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons."

We are without any fully reliable account of the rise and progress of the contentions between the rival classes in England, because in that country the records of the Operative Lodges before the close of the 17th century have been lost. But the sister kingdom of Scotland has been more fortunate. There the minutes of the Lodges of Edinburgh and Kilwinning exhibit abundant evidence of the struggle for place and power which terminated in the year 1736 by the establishment of the Speculative "Grand Lodge of Scotland."

As the subject matter to be treated in this chapter is the history of the founding at London, in the year 1717, of the Grand Lodge of England, it will be proper as a first step that some notice should be taken of the condition of Freemasonry in the south of England during ten years at the beginning of the 18th century.

The Lodges then existing in the kingdom consisted, it is supposed, both of Operative and non-Operative members. We have positive evidence of this in some instances, and especially as respects the Lodges in London.

Preston gives the following account of the condition of the institution in the beginning of the 18th century:



"During the Reign of Queen Anne, Masonry made no considerable progress. Sir Christopher Wren's age and infirmities drawing off his attention from the duties of his office (that of Grand Master), the Lodges decreased, and the annual festivals were entirely neglected. The old Lodge of St. Paul and a few others continued to meet regularly, but consisted of few members." ¹

Anderson, upon whose authority Preston had made this statement, says that "in the South the lodges were more and more disused, partly by the neglect of the Masters and Wardens and partly by not having a noble Grand Master at London, and the annual Assembly was not duly attended." ²

As the statement so often made by Anderson and other writers of his school, that there was, prior to the seventeenth year of the 18th century, an annual Assembly of the Craft in England over which a Grand Master presided, has been proved to be at least very doubtful, we must credit the decline of Operative Freemasonry to other causes than those given by Dr. Anderson.

We have heretofore attempted to show that the decline in the spirit of Operative Freemasonry was due to the decay of Gothic Architecture. By this cause the Freemasons were reduced to a lower level than they had ever before occupied, and were brought much nearer to the "Rough Masons" than was pleasing to their pride of skill, their "cunning." They thus lost the lead in the Craft which they had so long held on account of their acknowledged genius and the skill which in past times they had exhibited in the art of building.

But whatever may have been the cause, the fact is beyond dispute that at the beginning of the 18th century the Freemasons had lost much of their high standing as practical architects and had greatly diminished in numbers.

In the year 1716 there were at least four Lodges of Operative Freemasons in the city of London. The minutes of these Lodges are not extant, and we have no authentic means of knowing what was their precise condition.

But we do know that among their members were many gentlemen of education who were not Operative Freemasons, but belonged to the class of Theoretic or Speculative Freemasons, which



¹ "Illustrations of Masonry," Jones's edition, 1821, p. 189.

² "Constitutions," edition of 1738, p. 108.

it had long been the custom of the Operative Freemasons to admit into their Fraternity.

Preston, in his *Illustrations of Masonry*, in a passage already cited, speaking of the decline of the Lodges in the first ten years of the 18th century makes this statement:

"To increase their numbers, a proposition was made, and afterwards agreed to, that the privileges of Freemasonry should no longer be restricted to Operative Freemasons, but extend to men of various professions, provided they were regularly approved and initiated into the Order."

For this statement Preston gives no authority. Anderson, who was personally active within the period of time when this regulation is said to have been adopted, makes no allusion to it, and Preston himself says on a preceding page that "at a general assembly and feast of the Masons in 1697 many noble and eminent brethren were present, and among the rest, Charles, Duke of Richmond and Lennox, who was at that time Master of the lodge at Chichester."

The statement appears, therefore, to be incapable of acceptance as it stands. Such a proposition would certainly have been wholly unnecessary, as there is abundant evidence that in England during the 17th century "men of various professions" had been "regularly approved and initiated into the Order" that had long since lost its purely Operative requirements.

Elias Ashmole, the antiquary, states in his *Diary* that he and Colonel Mainwaring were initiated in a Lodge at Warrington in 1646, and he records the admission of several other non-Operatives in 1682 at a Lodge held in London.

Dr. Plot, in his Natural History of Staffordshire, printed in 1686, states that "persons of the most eminent quality did not disdain to be of the Fellowship."

Within the first twenty years of the 18th century Operative Freemasonry appears, judging from existing records, to have been in the following condition:

In the northern counties there were several Lodges of Operative Freemasons, which had a permanent character, having rules for their government, and holding meetings at which new members were admitted.

¹ "Illustrations of Masonry," Jones's edition, p. 189.



Thus Preston speaks of a Lodge which was at Chichester in 1697, of which the Duke of Richmond and Lennox was Master; there was a Lodge at Alnwick in Northumberland, whose records from 1701 are still in existence; ¹ and there was at least one Lodge, if not more, in the city of York, whose preserved minutes begin on March 19, 1712.² We have every reason to suppose that similar Lodges were to be found in other parts of the kingdom, though the minutes of their transactions have unfortunately been lost.

At London there were four Operative Lodges. These were the Lodges which in 1717 united in the formation of the Speculative Grand Lodge of England, an act of the greatest importance in Masonic history that has been called the "Revival."

All the Lodges mentioned consisted of two classes of members, namely, those who were Operative Freemasons and who worked in the mystery of the Craft, and those who were non-Operative, or, as they were sometimes called, Gentlemen Freemasons.

The ceremony of admission or initiation was at this time of a simple and perhaps only of a very rude character. There were but one or two forms or ceremonies common to the three ranks of Apprentices, Fellows, and Masters, and the division into degrees, as that word is now understood, was probably unknown.³

From the close of the 17th century the Operative Lodges were gradually losing their standing. They were no longer, as Lord Lindsay has said of their predecessors of the Middle Ages, "Parliaments of Genius"; their architectural skill had decayed; their geometrical secrets were lost; and the distinction which had once been so proudly maintained between the Freemasons and the "Rough Layers" was being rapidly wiped out.

Meantime the men of science and culture who had been admitted into the ranks of the Freemasons, thought that they saw in the principle of brotherhood which was still preserved, and in the symbolic teachings which were not yet altogether lost, a foundation for another association. They planned that in the new organization the fraternal spirit should remain as the bond



¹ Bro. W. J. Hughan has published extracts from the Minutes. See Mackey's "National Freemason," vol. iii, p. 233.

² See Hughan's History of Freemasonry in York, in his "Masonic Sketches and Reprints," p. 55. See also an article by him in the *Voice of Masonry*, vol. xiii, p. 571.

³ This subject is discussed in a chapter on the history of the origin of the three Craft degrees.

of union, and the doctrines of symbolism, hitherto practically applied to the art of architecture, should be in the future directed to the illustration of the science of morality.

Long afterwards the successors of these founders of Speculative Freemasonry defined it to be "a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols."

Feeling that there was no congenial companionship between themselves and the uncultured men who composed the Operative element of the association, the gentlemen of education and refinement who constituted the Theoretic element or the Honorary membership of the four Lodges then existing in London, resolved to change the character of these Lodges, and to withdraw them entirely from any connection with Operative or Practical Freemasonry.

It was in this way that Speculative Freemasonry found its origin in the desire of a few speculative thinkers who planned, for the gratification of their own taste, to transform what in the language of the times would have been called a club of workmen into a club of moralists.

The events connected with this alteration are fully recorded by Dr. Anderson, in the second edition of the *Constitutions*, and as this is really the official account of the transaction, it is better to give it in the very language of that account, than to offer any other version of it.

The history of the formation of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of England is given in the following words by Dr. Anderson, who is said to have been one of the leading actors in the event:

"King George I. entered London most magnificently on 20 Sept., 1714, and after the rebellion was over, A.D. 1716, the few Lodges at London, finding themselves neglected by Sir Christopher Wren, thought fit to cement under a Grand Master as the centre of union and harmony, viz., the Lodges that met—

- "1. At the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house in St. Paul's Church-yard.
- "2. At the Crown Ale-house in Parker's Lane near Drury Lane.
- "3. At the Apple Tree Tavern in Charles Street, Covent Garden.



"4. At the Rummer and Grapes Tavern in Channel Row, Westminster.

"They and some old brothers met at the said Apple Tree, and having put into the chair the oldest Master Mason (now the Master of a Lodge) they constituted themselves a Grand Lodge, pro tempore, in Due Form, and forthwith revived the Quarterly Communication of the Officers of Lodges (called the Grand Lodge) resolved to hold the Annual Feast and then to choose a Grand Master from among themselves, till they should have the honor of a noble brother at their head.

"Accordingly

On St. John Baptist's day, in the 3d year of King George I., A.D. 1717, the Assembly and Feast of the Free and Accepted Masons was held at the foresaid Goose and Gridiron Ale-house.

"Before dinner, the oldest Master Mason (now the Master of a Lodge) in the Chair, proposed a list of proper candidates, and the brethren by a majority of hands elected

"Mr. Anthony Sayer, Gentleman, Grand Master of Masons, Capt. Joseph Elliott Mr. Jacob Lamball, Carpenter Grand Wardens,

who being forthwith invested with the badges of office and power by the said oldest Master, and installed, was duly congratulated by the Assembly who paid him the homage.

"Sayer, Grand Master, commanded the Masters and Wardens of Lodges to meet the Grand Officers every quarter in communication at the place appointed in his summons sent by the Tyler." 1

Such is the account of the transforming of the four Operative to four Speculative Lodges, given by Dr. Anderson, who is believed, with George Payne, Esq., and Dr. Desaguliers, to have been a principal agent in effecting the change.

Limited as are the details of so important an event which Anderson, as a leading actor in the affair, might easily have made more copious, complete and satisfying they suggest several weighty points for our consideration.

We see that the change to be effected by the establishment of the Speculative Grand Lodge was not too hastily accomplished.

1 "Constitutions," 1738 edition, pp. 109, 110.



The first meeting in which it was resolved to organize a Grand Lodge took place some months before the actual organization of that body occurred.

Anderson says that the four Lodges met in 1716 and "revived the Quarterly Communication of the officers of Lodges."

Preston says that they met in February, 1717, and that at this meeting "it was resolved to revive the Quarterly Communications of the Fraternity."

This is a more accurate statement than that of Anderson. The meeting in February, 1717, was merely a first step in the desired direction. A resolution was adopted, or perhaps more correctly speaking, an agreement was entered into, to organize a Grand Lodge. But this agreement was not carried into execution until four months afterwards. There could have been no Grand Lodge without a Grand Master, and the Grand Master was not elected until the 24th of the following June. The apparent clash of the dates assigned to the preparatory meeting, Anderson saying it was in 1716, and Preston that it was in February, 1717, is easily explained.

Anderson in his narrative used the Old Style dating in which the year began on March 25th, therefore the next February would fall in 1716. Preston used the New Style, which begins the year on January 1st, and thereby the following February fell in 1717. The actual period of time referred to by both authors is really the same.

In a work 1 by an unknown author published in 1764 it is said that six Lodges were engaged in the organization of the Grand Lodge. But as the two additional Lodges are not identified, it is better to reject that statement, and to abide by the authority of Anderson, who, as Bro. Hughan says, "clearly wrote at a time when many personally knew as to the facts narrated and whose *Book of Constitutions* was really the official statement issued by the Grand Lodge."

The fact that four Lodges were engaged in the act of changing Operative into Speculative Freemasonry by organizing a Grand Lodge, while admitted as a historical fact by Lawrence Dermott, is used by him as an objection to the legality of the organization.

"To form," he says, "what Masons mean by a Grand Lodge, there must have been the Masters and Wardens of five regular

¹ "The Complete Freemason, or Multa Paucis, for Lovers of Secrets."



lodges, that is to say, five Masters and ten Wardens, making the number of installed officers fifteen." 1

Although Dermott very confidently asserts that this "is well known to every man conversant with the ancient laws, usages, customs, and ceremonies of Master Masons," Bro. Mackey had no doubt that this point of law so dogmatically proclaimed was the pure invention of Dermott's brain, and was entitled to no weight whatever.

As the Grand Lodge established in 1717 was the first one ever known, it was unlikely that there could be any "ancient laws" to regulate its organization.

It is noteworthy that each of these premier lodges met at a tavern or ale-house. During the 18th century Freemasons' Lodges in England almost universally had their lodge-rooms in the upper part of taverns. The custom was also adopted in this country, and all the early Lodges in America were held in the upper rooms of buildings occupied as taverns.

The custom of meeting in taverns was one that was not confined to the Masonic Brotherhood. The early part of the 18th century was, in London, as we have already seen, the era of clubs. These societies, established some for literary, some for social, and some for political purposes, always held their meetings in taverns. "Will's Coffee House" is made memorable in the numbers of the *Spectator* as the resort of the wits of that day.

It will also be noticed that these four Lodges were without names, such as are now borne by Lodges, but that they were known by the signs of the taverns in which they held their meetings. Some time elapsed before the Lodges in England began to assume distinctive names. One Lodge to do so was Friendship Lodge No. 3, which is so styled in Cole's *List of Lodges for 1767*.

Lodges, however, had special names long before 1767. In Masonic Records, 1717–1894, by Bro. John Lane, will be found several instances of Lodges having adopted distinctive titles. The first Lodge to do so, according to this excellent authority, was the University Lodge, No. 74, in A.D. 1730. There was also a French Lodge held in London, as was University Lodge, and so named in 1737 or earlier.

¹ "Ahiman Rezon," p. 13.

² "Ahiman Rezon," p. 14.



Bro. Hughan in a letter to us deemed the matter (of names) not of much importance but he said it is as well to remember the above dates as beginning the practice in England and that it was begun probably much earlier in Scotland.

Mention should perhaps be made here of the Philo Musicæ et Architecturæ Societas, Apollini, at London, 1725–1727, which conferred Masonic degrees and in doing so independently of the Grand Lodge was deemed "irregular." As the body occurs in lists of then existing Lodges we may allude to it in referring to Masonic organizations having distinctive names. See the splendid book upon the subject of this remarkable Masonic association, published by Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London, 1900.

No difficulty or confusion, however, arose from this custom of naming Lodges by the signs of the taverns in which they held their meetings, for it seldom happened that more than one Lodge ever met at any tavern. "The practice," says Gould, "of any one tavern being common as a place of meeting, to two or more Lodges, seems to have been almost unknown in the last (the 18th) century."

Two of the four taverns in which these four original Lodges were held, and two of the Lodges themselves, namely, the "Apple Tree," where the plan of separating the Speculative from the Operative element was begun, and the "Goose and Gridiron," where that project was perfected by the organization of the new Grand Lodge, particularly claim our attention.

But it will be more convenient while engaged on this subject to trace the fate and fortune of the four Lodges. In this investigation we have been greatly aided by the laborious and accurate treatise of Bro. Robert Freke Gould on the Four Old Lodges. After his exhaustive analysis there is but little chance of unearthing any new discoveries, though we have been able to add from other sources a few facts of interest.

The Lodge first named on Anderson's list met at the "Goose and Gridiron Ale-house," and it was there that on the 24th of June, 1717, the Grand Lodge of England was established. Elmes says that "Sir Christopher Wren was Master of St. Paul's Lodge, which during the building of the Cathedral of St. Paul's, met at the 'Goose and Gridiron' in St. Paul's Church-yard, and is now

¹ "The Four Old Lodges," by Robert Freke Gould, p. 13.



the Lodge of Antiquity, acting by immemorial prescription; and he regularly presided at its meetings for upward of eighteen years."

Dr. Oliver says that Dr. Desaguliers, who may be properly reputed as the principal founder of modern Speculative Freemasonry, was initiated into the ceremonies of the Operative system, such as they were, in the Lodge that met at the "Goose and Gridiron," and the date assigned for his admission is the year 1712.

But Bro. Oliver's statements have been less freely accepted in recent times. Bro. Hughan writes to us thus: "We are wholly in ignorance when Dr. Desaguliers and Dr. Anderson were initiated, or in what Lodges, all particulars as to such being mere guesswork." In the same letter he points out "Neither is it sure there were only four Operative Lodges in the city of London in 1716. The immortal quartette of 1717 may have been mainly Operative, but even that is not certain, as we are not informed as to their members until the next decade, when assuredly they were severally of a Speculative character." Bro. Hawkins asserts that Dr. Desaguliers' name appears in the list of members in 1725 meeting at the "Horn," in Westminster, as the Lodge No. 4.

Larwood and Hotten in their History of Sign Boards, copying from a paper of the Tatler, say that the Tavern was originally a Music House, with the sign of the "Mitre." We are further told that when it ceased to be a Music House the succeeding landlord chose for his sign a goose stroking the bars of a gridiron with his foot in ridicule of the "Swan and Harp," which was a common sign for the early Music Houses.² We doubt the accuracy of this origin, and think it more likely that the "Swan and Harp" was mangled into the "Goose and Gridiron" by the same blundering, so common in the history of signs, which corrupted "God encompasseth us" into the "Goat and Compasses" or the "Belle Sauvage" into the "Bell and Savage."

In the list of Lodges for 1725 to 1730 contained in the Minute Book of the Grand Lodge of England, Lodge No. 1 is still recorded



¹ Elmes' "Sir Christopher Wren and His Times," quoted in the *Keystons*. R. F. Gould, "History of Freemasonry," vol. 2, doubts whether Wren was a Freemason. For a complete showing of the facts consult Mackey-Hughan-Hawkins' revised edition, "Encyclopædia of Freemasonry."

² "History of Sign Boards," p. 445.

as holding its meetings at the "Goose and Gridiron," whence, however, it not very long after moved, for in the next list, from 1730 to 1732, it is recorded as being held at the "King's Arms," in St. Paul's Churchyard.

The "King's Arms" continued to be its place of meeting (except a short time in 1735, when it met at the "Paul's Head," Ludgate Street) until 1768, when it removed to the "Mitre." Eight years before, it assumed the name of the "West India and American Lodge." In 1770 it became the "Lodge of Antiquity." Of this Lodge the distinguished Masonic writer, William Preston, was a member. In 1779 it temporarily seceded from the Grand Lodge.

At the union of the two Grand Lodges of "Moderns" and "Antients," it lost its number "One" in drawing lots and became number "Two," which number it still retains, though freely recognized as the "Premier Lodge of England."

The "Goose and Gridiron Tavern" continued to be the place of meeting of the Grand Lodge until 1721, when because of the need of more room due to the increase of Lodges the annual feast was held at Stationers' Hall.¹ The Grand Lodge never returned to the "Goose and Gridiron." It afterwards held the quarterly communications at various taverns, and the annual assembly and feast always at some one of the Halls of the several Livery Companies of London. This migratory system prevailed until the Freemasons were able to erect a Hall of their own.

The second Lodge taking part in the 1717 organization of the Grand Lodge, met at the "Crown Ale-house" in Parker's Lane near Drury Lane. According to Bro. Gould, it moved about 1723 to the "Queen's Head," Turnstile, Holborn; to the "Green Lettuce," Brownlow Street, in 1725; thence to the "Rose and Rummer" in 1728, and to the "Rose and Buffer" in 1729. In 1730 it met at the "Bull and Gate," Holborn, and appearing for the last time in the list for 1736, was struck off the roll. Anderson, in the list published by him in 1738, says: "The Crown in Parker's Lane, the other of the four old Lodges, is now extinct." ³



¹ Anderson's "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 112.

² Gould's "Four Old Lodges," p. 6.

³ Anderson's "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 185. Bro. Hughan comments "The original No. 2 was erased in 1736."

The third Lodge engaged in the Grand Lodge organization was that which met at the "Apple Tree Tavern" in 1717. There in February, 1717, the Freemasons who were preparing to sever the connection between the Operative and Theoretic brethren, took the preliminary steps toward effecting that design. From the "Apple Tree" it moved about 1723 to the "Queen's Head," Knave's Acre. During this year, 1723, the members gave up their distinctive position and were constituted into a new Lodge on February 27, taking the No. 11 in 1729. From the "Queen's Head" the Lodge moved in 1740 to the "George and Dragon," Portland Street, Oxford Market; thence in 1744 to the "Swan" in the same region. In the lists from 1768 to 1793 it is described as the Lodge of Fortitude. After various other movements, it combined in 1818 with the old Cumberland Lodge, and is now the Fortitude and Old Cumberland Lodge No. 12 on the roll of the United Grand Lodge of England.¹

Dr. Anderson, in Bro. Hughan's opinion, puts the matter quite clearly in his Book of Constitutions, 1738, p. 185, when the Lodge was No. 10 on the list of London Lodges only. "This was one of the four Lodges mentioned, p. 109, viz., the 'Apple-Tree Tavern' in Charles Street, Covent Garden, whose Constitution is immemorial: But after they removed to the 'Queen's Head' upon some Difference, the members that met there came under a new Constitution, tho' they wanted it not, and it is therefore placed at this number." Bro. Hughan continues, "It is, however, of Time Immemorial continuity."

Of this third or "Apple Tree" Lodge, Anthony Sayer, the first Grand Master of England, was a member, and probably in 1717 or previously the Master. In 1723 he is recorded as Senior Warden of the Lodge, which is certainly evidence of his Masonic zeal.

The last of the four Old Lodges which constituted the Grand Lodge met in 1717 at the "Rummer and Grapes Tavern," Westminster. This Lodge moved to the "Horn Tavern," Westminster, in 1723. It seemed blessed with a spirit of permanency which did not appertain to the three other Lodges, for it remained at the "Horn" for forty-three years, not migrating until 1767, when it went to the "Fleece," Tothill Street, Westminster. The year

¹ Gould, "Four Old Lodges," p. 7.



after, it assumed the name of the Old Horn Lodge. In 1774 it united with and adopted the name of the Somerset House Lodge, and met at first at the "Adelphi" and afterward until 1815 at "Freemasons' Tavern." In 1828 it absorbed the Royal Inverness Lodge, and is now registered on the roll of the United Grand Lodge of England as the Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge No. 4.1

George Payne, who was twice Grand Master, in 1718 and in 1720, had been Master of the original Rummer and Grapes Lodge. He must have been so before his first election as Grand Master in 1718, and he is recorded in the first edition of Anderson as having been its Master again in 1723. The Lodge received an important benefit from this circumstance, as is shown by the following record taken by Entick from the minutes of the Grand Lodge:

In 1747 the Lodge, whose number had been changed to No. 2, was erased from the Books of Lodges for not obeying an order of the Quarterly Communication. But in 1753, the members having petitioned the Grand Lodge for restoration, Entick says in his edition of the Constitutions that "after a long debate, it was ordered that in respect to Brother Payne, late Grand Master, the Lodge No. 2 lately held at the 'Horn' in Palace Yard, Westminster, should be restored and have its former rank and place in the list of Lodges." ²

Payne, a scholar, did much for the advancement of Speculative Freemasonry, and the Grand Lodge by this act paid fitting homage to his character and showed itself not unmindful of his services to the Fraternity.

Such are the facts, well authenticated by unquestioned historical authorities, which are connected with the establishment of the first Grand Lodge of Speculative Freemasons, not only in England, but in the world. Whether this organization was the invention of an entirely new system or only the revival of an old and for a short time discontinued one will now be fairly considered.



¹ Gould, "Four Old Lodges," p. 7.

³We find a mass of information was printed in 1894 in Bro. John Lane's *Masonic Records*, 1717–1894, respecting the old Lodges mentioned in this chapter. The "Lodge of Antiquity" met in other places than those here stated, and so as to several of the other Lodges; but they need not be repeated now.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-FOUR

WAS THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GRAND LODGE IN 1717 A REVIVAL?



HE practice of all Masonic writers from the earliest period of their literature to a very recent day, has been to name the transaction which resulted in the organization of the Grand Lodge of England in the year 1717 the "Revival of Freemasonry."

Anderson, writing in 1723, in the first edition of the *Constitutions*, says that "the freeborn British nation had revived the drooping Lodges of London." In the year 1738, in the second edition of the same work, he asserts that the old Brothers who met at the "Apple Tree Tavern," "forthwith revived the Quarterly Communication of the Officers of Lodges, called the Grand Lodge."

This statement has been repeated by Preston, Calcott, Oliver,¹ and all the older Masonic authors who have written upon the subject. By frequent repetition the above claim brought about an almost universal belief among the larger portion of the Fraternity that from some unknown or indefinite era until the second decade of the 18th century the Grand Lodge had been in a state of profound slumber, and that the Quarterly Communications, once so common, had long been discontinued, through the inertness and indifference of the Craft, while the Lodges were drooping like sickly plants.

¹The reader will note that William Preston, born 1742, died 1818, was initiated about 1763. Best known for his "Illustrations of Masonry" published 1772, and which is the foundation of every Monitor now in use. Wellins Calcott published in 1769 "A Candid Disquisition of the Principles and Practices of the Most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons; together with some Strictures on the Origin, Nature, and Design of that Institution." Evidently he was a "P. M." and Bro. Hawkins deems him to have been a member of the Palladian Lodge, now No. 120, of Hereford, England. Calcott is styled by Bro. Woodford "the father of the Masonic philosophical and didactic or instructive school." Rev. George Oliver, born 1782, died 1867, initiated by his father in 1801 when only 19 years old, was easily the most prolific of Masonic authors, and though his writings are sometimes fanciful and never too critical, they are always most interesting, suggestive, and obviously sincere.

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We were also informed that in the year 1717, owing to the successful efforts of a few learned scholars, such as Desaguliers, Anderson, and Payne, the Grand Lodge had been awakened from its sleep of years, the Quarterly Communications had been renewed as of old, and the Lodges had sprung into fresh and vigorous existence. Such was for a long time and indeed still is, though to a diminished extent, the orthodox Masonic creed respecting the Revival of Freemasonry in the 18th century.

This creed, popular as it is, has in modern times been ruthlessly attacked by some of our more advanced thinkers, who are skeptical where to doubt is wise, and who are not prepared to accept legends as facts, nor to confuse tradition with history.

Of course there is the opposing argument that before the year 1717 there never was a Grand Lodge in England, and there could have been no Quarterly Communications. Therefore, without previous life, there could have been no revival, but the Grand Lodge established in June, 1717, was a new invention, the introduction of a plan of Freemasonry never before known.

Which of these theories is correct, or whether there is not a mezzo termine — a middle course or just mean between the two — are questions well worthy of examination.

Let us first inquire what was the character of the four Lodges, and indeed of all the Lodges in England in existence at the so-called "Revival," or which had existed at any previous time. What was the authority under which they acted, what was their character, and how were they affected by the founding of a new Grand Lodge?

As to the authority under which the four old Lodges, as well as all others that existed in England, acted, it must be admitted that they derived that authority from no power outside of themselves. "The authority," says Bro. Hughan, "by which they worked prior to the advent of the Grand Lodge was their own. We know of no other prior to that period for England." 1

Preston admits that before 1717 "a sufficient number of Masons met together within a certain district, with the consent of the sheriff or chief magistrate of the place, were empowered to make Masons and practice the rites of Masonry without Warrant of Constitution." ²

¹ See Voice of Masonry, vol. xiii, p. 571.

² Preston's "Illustrations," p. 191, note.



Bro. Hughan substantially repeats this statement as follows: "A body of Masons in any district or town appear usually to have congregated and formed Lodges, and they had the 'Ancient Charges' or Rolls to guide them as to the rules and regulations for Masons generally. There were no Grand Masters or Grand Lodges before 1716–17, and so there were no authorities excepting such as the annual assemblies and the 'Old Charges' furnished in England." He admits that "there were laws for the government of the Lodges apparently, though unwritten, which were duly observed by the brotherhood."

This view is confirmed, impliedly at least, by all the Old Constitutions in manuscript, from the most ancient to the most recent. In none of these (and one of them has a date only three years prior to the so-called "Revival") do we find any reference whatever to a Grand Lodge or to a Grand Master. But they repeatedly speak of Lodges in which Masons were to be "accepted," and the counsels of which were to be kept secret by the Fellows.

An allusion to the manner of organizing a Lodge is in the Harleian manuscript, which prescribes that it must consist of not less than five Freemasons, one of whom must be a Master or Warden of the limit or division wherein the Lodge is held.

From this regulation we are led to believe that in 1660, the probable date of the Harleian manuscript, nothing more was necessary in forming a Lodge "to make Masons or practice the rites of Masonry," as Preston gives the phrase, than that a requisite number be present, with a Master or Warden working in that locality.

Now the Master, as the word is here used, meant a Freemason of the highest rank, who was engaged in building with workmen under him, and a Warden was one who having passed out of his apprenticeship, had become a Fellow and was invested with an authority over the other Fellows, inferior only to that of the Master. The word and the office are recognized in the early English Charters as pertaining to the ancient Gilds. Thus the Charters granted in 1354 by Edward III. gave the London Companies the privilege to elect annually for their government "a certain number of Wardens." In 1377 an oath was prescribed called the "Oath of the Wardens of the Crafts," which contained these words: "Ye shall swere that ye shall wele and treuly oversee the Craft of ———— whereof ye be chosen Wardeyns for



the year." In the reign of Elizabeth the presiding officer began to be called the Master, and in the reign of James I., between 1603 and 1625, the Gilds were generally governed by a Master and Wardens. The government of Lodges by a Master and Wardens must have been introduced into the Gilds of Freemasons in the 17th century, and this is rendered probable by the fact that in the Harleian manuscript just quoted, and whose probable date is 1660, it is provided "that for the future the sayd Society, Company and Fraternity of Free Masons shall be regulated and governed by One Master & Assembly & Wardens as the said Company shall think to choose, at every yearely General Assembly."

A similar officer in the *Hütten* or Lodges of the old German Freemasons was called the *Parlirer*.

We arrive, then, at the conclusion that in the 17th century, while in various places there were permanent Lodges presided over by a Master and Wardens, any five Freemasons might open a temporary or "occasional" Lodge for the admission of members of the Craft, provided one of these five was either the Master or a Warden of a permanent Lodge in the neighborhood.

There seems no other way of interpreting the 26th article in the Harleian Constitutions. But nowhere, in any of the Old Constitutions, before or after the Harleian, even as late as 1720, the date of the Papworth manuscript, do we find the slightest allusion to any outside authority which was required to constitute either permanent or temporary Lodges.

Preston is thus fully sustained by the concurrent testimony of the old manuscripts. Therefore, when Anderson in his first edition gives the form of constituting a new Lodge and says that it is "according to the ancient usages of Masonry," he indulges in a rhetorical flourish that has no foundation in truth. There is no evidence of the slightest historical value that any such usage existed before the second decade of the 18th century.

But immediately after what is called the "Revival" the system then practiced of forming Lodges was entirely changed. Preston says that among the regulations, proposed and agreed to at the meeting in 1717, was the following:

¹ Anderson's "Constitutions," 1st edition, p. 71.



"That the privilege of assembling as Masons, which had been hitherto unlimited, should be vested in certain Lodges or Assemblies of Masons convened in certain places; and that every Lodge to be hereafter convened, except the four old Lodges at this time existing, should be legally authorized to act by a warrant from the Grand Master for the time being granted to certain individuals by petition, with the consent and approbation of the Grand Lodge in communication; and that without such warrant no Lodge should be hereafter deemed regular or constitutional." ¹

We have this regulation on the evidence of Preston alone, for following the unfortunate habit of our early Masonic writers, he cites no authority. It is not mentioned by Anderson, and the preserved minutes of the Grand Lodge of England extend no farther than the 25th of November, 1723.

Still, as Preston gives it within quotation marks, and as it bears internal evidence in its wording of having been a formal regulation adopted at or very near the period to which Preston assigns it, we may accept it as authentic and suppose that he had access to sources of information no longer extant. As the Grand Lodge was organized in 1717 in the rooms of the Lodge of which Preston afterward became a member, it is very possible that that Lodge may have had in its possession the full records of that meeting when Preston wrote, but these have since been lost.²

At all events the "General Regulations," compiled by Grand Master Payne in 1720, and approved the next year by the Grand Lodge, contain a similar provision in the following words:

"If any set or number of Masons shall take upon themselves to form a Lodge without the Grand Master's warrant, the regular Lodges are not to countenance them, nor own them as fair Brethren and duly formed, nor approve of their acts and deeds; but must treat them as rebels, until they humble themselves, as the Grand Master shall, in his prudence, direct; and until he approve of them by his warrant." ³



¹ Preston, "Illustrations," p. 191.

² Findel ("History," p. 140) says the regulation was adopted in 1723. Preston is our only authority, and his statement must be fully accepted or wholly rejected. Findel was probably led into error by seeing the General Regulation above quoted, which is very similar. This was published in 1723, but adopted by the Grand Lodge in 1721.

^{3 &}quot;General Regulations," article viii. Anderson, 1st edition, p. 60.

If we compare the practice by which Lodges were brought into existence under the wholly Operative rules, and that adopted by the Speculative Freemasons after the organization of the Grand Lodge in 1717, we will very clearly see that there was here no revival of an old system which had fallen into decay and disuse, but the invention of one that was never before known.

The next point in discussing whether or not the transactions of 1717 constituted a Revival will be the character of the Lodges before and after those transactions as compared with each other.

During the 17th century, to go no farther back, and up to the second decade of the 18th, all the Lodges of Freemasons in England were Operative Lodges, that is to say, most of their members were Stonemasons, engaged in building according to certain principles of architecture known only to themselves.

They had admitted among their members persons of rank or learning who were not Operative Stonemasons or builders by profession, but all their laws and regulations were applicable to a society of mechanics or workingmen.

There are no minutes in England, as there are in Scotland, of Lodges prior to the 18th century. At the beginning of the 18th century we have "The Orders to be observed by the Company and Fellowship of Freemasons att a Lodge held at Alnwick, Septr. 29, 1701, being the Gen'll Head Meeting Day."

But the "Old Charges" in the manuscript Constitutions from 1390 to 1852, of which about eighty have been preserved, supply us (especially the later ones of the 17th century) with the regulations governing the Craft during the ante-revival period. It is unnecessary to quote in full any of these Old Constitutions. We need but say that they bear the strongest internal evidence that they were compiled for the purely Operative Freemasons.

They do not apply to any merely moral or speculative society. Except those clauses directing how the Craftsmen were to conduct themselves both in the Lodge and out of it, so that the reputation of the Brotherhood should not be injured, they tell how the Freemasons should labor in their art of building, so that the employer might be "truly served." The same regulations would apply to a Gild of Carpenters, of Smiths, or any other mechanical trade, as to one of Freemasons.



While these Lodges were wholly Operative in their character and design, there is abundant evidence, as we have seen, that they admitted into their companionship persons who were not Stonemasons. The article in the Harleian Constitutions, to which reference has just been made, while stating that a Lodge called to make a Mason must consist of five Free Masons, adds that one of them at least shall be "of the trade of Free Masonry." The other four, of course, might be non-Operatives, that is to say, persons of rank, wealth, or learning who were sometimes called Theoretic and sometimes Gentlemen Masons.

But in the laws enacted for the government of the Craft, no exceptional provision was made in them, by which any difference was created in the privileges of the two classes.

The admission of these Theoretic Craftsmen into the Fraternity did not, therefore, in the slighest degree affect the Operative character of the Order, except in so far as that the friendly contact with men of culture must have given to the less educated members a portion of refinement that could not fail to elevate them above the other Craft Gilds.

Yet so intimate was the connection between these Operative Freemasons and their successors, the Speculatives, that the code of laws prepared in 1721 by Anderson for the Grand Lodge and published in 1723, under the title of *The Charges of a Freemason for the use of the Lodges in London*, was a copy with no important variations from what Anderson calls the "Old Gothic Constitutions."

These "Charges" have been accepted by the modern Fraternity of English-speaking Freemasons as the basis of the Landmarks of the Order. To make them of use it has been found necessary to give them a symbolic or figurative sense.

Thus, "to work," which in the Operative Constitution signifies "to build," is interpreted in the Speculative system as meaning "to confer degrees"; the clause which prescribes that "all the tools used in working shall be approved by the Grand Lodge" is interpreted as denoting that the ritual, ceremonies, and by-laws of every Lodge must be supervised by the Grand Lodge. Thus every regulation which clearly referred to a fraternity of builders has, in the course of the changes necessary to render it applicable to a moral association, been given a figurative sense.



The significant fact that while in the government of Speculative Freemasonry the spirit and meaning of these "Old Charges" have been entirely altered, the words have been carefully retained is an important and absolute proof that the Speculative system is the direct successor of the Operative.

When the Theoretic or Gentlemen Freemasons had, in the close of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, acquired such a gain in numbers and in influence in the London Lodges that they were able so to affect the character of those Lodges as to divert them from the practice of an Operative art to the pursuit of a Speculative science, such change could not be called a Revival, if we respect the meaning of that word. Nothing of the kind had been known; and when the members of the Lodges ceased to pay attention to the Craft or mystery of practical Stonemasonry, and resolved to treat it thenceforth in a purely symbolic sense, this act could be but a new departure in the career of Freemasonry. The ship was still there, but the object of the voyage had been changed.

Again: we find a third change in the character of the Masonic Society when we compare the general government of the Craft as it appears before and after the year 1717.

This change is particularly striking in respect to the way in which the Craft were ruled in their Operative days, compared with the system adopted by the Speculative Freemasons.

We have said that prior to the year 1717, there never were Grand Masters or a Grand Lodge except such as were mythically constructed by the romantic genius of Dr. Anderson.

The only historical records that we have of the condition of Freemasonry in England and of the customs of the Craft during the three centuries which preceded the 18th, are to be found in the old manuscript Constitutions.

Careful examination of these documents show that neither in the *Legend of the Craft*, constituting the introduction of each Constitution, nor in the "Charges" which follow, is there the slightest allusion, either direct or by implication, to the office of Grand Master or to the body now called a Grand Lodge.

But it can not be denied that there was an annual convocation of the Craft, which was called sometimes the "Congregation," sometimes the "Assembly," and sometimes the "General



Assembly." We must accept this as historical fact, or we must deny all the manuscript Constitutions from the 14th to the 18th century. All of them allude to this annual convocation of the Craft, and regulations are made concerning attendance.

Thus the Halliwell or Regius manuscript says that "every Master who is a Mason must be present at the general congregation if he is duly informed when the assembly is to be holden; and to that assembly he must go unless he have a reasonable excuse."

The precise words of this most ancient of all the Old Masonic Constitutions, dating, as it does, not later than toward the close of the 14th century, are as follows:

> That every mayster, that ys a mason, Must ben at the generale congregacyon, So that he hyt resonably y-tolde Where that the semblé schal be holde; And to that semblé he must nede gon, But he have a resenabul skwsacyon.¹

The Cooke manuscript, about sixty years later, has a similar provision. This manuscript is important, inasmuch as it describes the character of the Assembly and defines the purposes for which it was to be convoked. It states that the Assembly, or, as it is there called, the Congregation, shall assemble once a year, or at least once in three years, for the examination of Master Masons, to see that they possessed sufficient skill and knowledge in their

An important admission in this manuscript is that the regulation for the government of this Assembly "is written and taught in our book of charges."

All the later Constitutions make a similar statement in words that do not substantially vary.

The Harleian manuscript, whose date is about 1660, says that Euclid gave the admonition that the Masons were to assemble once a year to take counsel how the Craft could best work so as to serve their Lord and Master for his profit and their credit, and to correct such as had offended. And in another manuscript,

¹ Bro. Roderick H. Baxter, "Transactions," Lodge of Research, Leicester, England, year 1914-1915, has modernized the lines thus, "That every master, that is a mason, must be at the general congregation, so that he it reasonably be told where that the assembly shall be held; and to that assembly he must needs go, unless he have a reasonable excuse."



much earlier than the Harleian, it is said that the Freemasons should attend the Assembly, and if any had trespassed against the Craft, he should there abide the award of the Masters and Fellows.

This Assembly met in order that statutes or regulations be enacted for the government of the Craft, and that any disputes between the Craftsmen might be adjusted. It was both a legislative and a judicial body, and thus resembled the Grand Lodge of the present day, but in no other way was there any likeness between them.

Now, leaving out of the question the legendary parts crediting the origin of this annual assembly to Euclid or Athelstan or Prince Edwin, which, of course, are of no historical authority, we cannot believe that all these Constitutions should speak of the existence of such an Assembly at the time of writing, and lay down a regulation in the most positive terms, that every Freemason should attend it, if the whole were mere imagination.

We can account for the mythical character of a legend, but not for the mythical character of a law enacted at a specified time for the government of an association, a law repeated in all the copies of the statutes written or published for more than three centuries continuously.

In the establishment of a Grand Lodge with quarterly meetings and an annual one in which a Grand Master and other Grand Officers were elected for the following year, we find no likeness to anything that had existed previous to 1717. We can not, therefore, in these points call the organization which took place in that year a "Revival." It was a radical change in the system.

Another change, and a very important one, occurred shortly after the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, and had reference to the ritual or forms of initiation. During the purely Operative period of Freemasonry there was an esoteric system of admission to the brotherhood of the Craft. This covered the three classes of Masters, Fellows, and Apprentices. How far this was divided into ceremonies, separate and distinct, is not altogether clear. Bros. Mackey and Hughan thought there was but one degree practiced by the Operative Craft. Bros. Speth and Gould were of the opinion that there were two degrees



before 1717. Bro. Woodford believed the differing conclusions were due to the mere "question of arrangement and terminology."

When the Theoretic members of the London Lodges left the Operatives in 1717 and formed the Speculative system, they, of course, at first accepted the old method of admission. But in two or three years they seem to have arranged the three degrees of ancient Craft Masonry, each as a form of initiation to one of the three classes and to that one only. What had been a division of the Fraternity into three classes became now a division into three degrees.¹

This was a most important change, and as nothing of the kind was known to the Craft before the 1717 Grand Lodge, it certainly can not be a correct use of the word to call an entire change of a system and the adoption of a new one a revival of the old.

Bro. W. P. Buchan, in many articles published in the London Freemason, attacked what has been called the Revival theory with much vigor. He asserts that "our system of degrees, words, grips, signs, etc., was not in existence until about A. D. 1717," and he credits the present system to the inventive genius of Anderson and Desaguliers. He contends that modern Freemasonry was simply a reconstruction of an ancient society, viz., of some old Pagan philosophy:

"Before the 18th century we had a renaissance of Pagan architecture; then to follow suit in the 18th century we had a renaissance in a new dress of Pagan mysticism; but for neither are we indebted to the Operative Masons, although the Operative Masons were made use of in both cases." ²

There is in this statement a mixture of truth and error. Doubtless the three degrees into which the system is now divided were unknown to the Freemasons of the 17th century, and to some extent they probably were an invention of those scholars who organized the Grand Lodge of Speculative Freemasonry, mainly of Dr. Desaguliers, assisted perhaps by Anderson and Payne. But there were signs of recognition, methods of government, legends, and some form, though a simple one, of initiation, in



¹ The history of the three degrees will be discussed in a separate chapter.

² London Freemason, September 29, 1871.

existence prior to the 18th century, which formed the kernel of the more elaborate system of the modern Freemasons.

Bro. Hughan calls attention to the fact, if there were need of proofs, in addition to what has been found in the authentic accounts of the mediæval Freemasons, that in the *Tatler*, published in 1709, is a passage in which the writer, speaking of a class of men called the "Pretty Fellows," says that "they have their signs and tokens like the Freemasons." ¹

But Bro. Buchan admits that the "elements or ground work" of the system existed before the year 1717. This is in fact the only theory that can be successfully maintained on the subject.

The Grand Lodge of Speculative Freemasons, organized at the "Goose and Gridiron Tavern" in London, 1717, was a new system, founded on the older one existing in England years before, and which came from the Operative Freemasons of the Middle Ages.

The change was not, as Hyneman ² has called it, a Revolution, for that would indicate a violent disruption, and a sudden and entire change of principles.

It was not a Revival, as most of the earlier writers have entitled it, for we should thus infer that the new system was only a renewal without change of the old one.

But it was a gradual movement from an old into a new system — of Operative into Speculative Freemasonry — in which the later system has been built upon the earlier, and the practical art of building has been spiritualized into a theoretic science of morality, illustrated by a symbolism drawn mainly from architecture.

We thus recognize the regular descent of the modern Speculative Freemasons from their Operative predecessors, and we answer the question which forms the heading of the present chapter.

But it has been said that in one sense at least we may with propriety apply the word "Revival" to the transactions of the early part of the 18th century. Operative Freemasonry, and what



¹ Voice of Masonry, April, 1873.

² In a work abounding in errors, entitled "Ancient York and London Grand Lodges," by Leon Hyneman, Philadelphia, 1872. Its fallacies as a contribution to Masonic history have been shown by the incisive but courteous criticism of Bro. Hughan.

If we may rely on the authority of Preston, the Fraternity at the time of the revolution in 1688 was so much reduced in the south of England, that no more than seven regular Lodges met in London and its suburbs, of which two only were worthy of notice.¹ Anderson mentions seven by their locality, and says that there were "some more that assembled statedly." ²

These were, of course, all purely Operative Lodges. Thus one of them, Anderson tells us, was called upon to give architectural counsel as to the best design for rebuilding St. Thomas's Hospital, a clear evidence that its members were practical builders.

This decline in the number of the Lodges may possibly be due to local and temporary causes. It was certainly not accompanied, as might have been expected, with a corresponding decline in the popularity of the institution, for if we may believe the same authority, "at a general assembly and feast of the Masons in 1697, many noble and eminent brethren were present; and among the rest, Charles, duke of Richmond and Lennox, who was at that time Master of the lodge at Chichester." ⁴

Admitting that there was a decline, it was simply a decline of the Operative Lodges. The act of 1717 was not to revive them, but eventually to extinguish them and to establish Speculative Lodges in their places; nor was it to revive Operative Freemasonry, but to establish for it an entirely different institution.

Therefore we arrive at the legitimate conclusion that the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England in June, 1717, was not a revival of the old Freemasonry, which soon after became extinct, but its change into a new system. The Operative Freemasons who did go into the new association were merged in the Masons Company, or acted thenceforward as individual Craftsmen unconnected with a Gild.



¹ Preston, "Illustrations of Masonry," 12th edition, 1812, p. 207.

² Anderson, "Constitutions of the Freemasons," 2d edition, p. 107.

² Anderson, "Constitutions of the Freemasons," 2d edition, p. 106.

⁴ Preston, "Illustrations of Masonry," 12th edition, 1812, p. 207.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-FIVE

THE EARLY YEARS OF SPECULATIVE FREEMASONRY IN ENGLAND



N the feast of St. John the Baptist, the 24th of June, in the year 1717, the principal members of the four old Operative Lodges in London, who had previously met in February and agreed to constitute a Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, assembled at the "Goose and Gridiron Tavern" in St. Paul's Church-

yard with some other old members of the Craft, and there and then organized the new Grand Lodge.

This undertaking was accomplished by electing a Grand Master and two Grand Wardens, after which the Brethren proceeded to partake of a dinner, a communication and custom which has ever since been continued under the name of the Grand Assembly and Feast.

The written minutes in the record book of the Grand Lodge do not begin before November, 1723. Thus we are indebted for all that we know of the transactions on that eventful day to the very limited account contained in the 2d edition of Dr. Anderson's *Constitutions*, with a few additional details which are given by Preston in his *Illustrations*.

Preston cites no authority for the facts which he has stated. But the meeting of the Grand Lodge was held in the room of the Lodge which afterwards became the Lodge of Antiquity, and of which Preston was a prominent member. Therefore it is not improbable that some draft of those early proceedings may have been contained in the archives of that Lodge which have been since lost. To these facts Preston would naturally, from his connection with the Lodge, have had access. If such was the case, it is quite certain that he must have made use of them in compiling his history.

We are disposed, therefore, from these circumstances, together with a just consideration of the character of Bro. Preston, to



accept his statements as authentic, though they are unsupported by any other authority of that date whose testimony is now in our possession.¹

The first indication of a change, though this seems not purposely intended, by which the Operative system was to become eventually a Speculative organization, is seen in the election as presiding officers of three persons who were not Operative Freemasons.

Mr. Anthony Sayer, the first Grand Master, is described by Bro. James Anderson in his record of the election by the legal title of "Gentleman." This title, by the laws of honor, was bestowed upon one who can live without manual labor and can support himself without engaging in any mechanical employment. Such a person, say the heralds, "is called Mr., and may write himself Gentleman." ²

"Anthony Sayer, Gentleman," as he is described in the record, was undoubtedly a mere Theoretic member of the Masonic association and not an Operative Freemason.

There were two Grand Wardens elected at the same time, one being Captain Joseph Elliot. Of his social position we have no further knowledge than what is conveyed by the title prefixed to his name, which would indicate that he was of the military or naval profession, probably a retired or half-pay officer.

The other Grand Warden was Mr. Jacob Lamball, who is described as a Carpenter.

Thus we see that the first three officers of the Grand Lodge were not Operative members of the Craft of Stonecutters.

The choice, however, of a Carpenter, a trade closely connected with that of the workers in stone, affords proof that it was not intended to restrict the membership of the future Speculative society altogether to persons who were not mechanics.



¹ Preston is, however, sometimes careless, a charge to which all the early Masonic writers are subject. Thus, he says on p. 209, "Illustrations of Masonry," edition 1812, that Sayer appointed his Wardens. But these officers were, like the Grand Master, elected until 1720, when they were appointed by the Grand Master subject to confirmation by the Grand Lodge. R. F. Gould in "Concise History of Freemasonry," p. 364, mentions the "holding of a 'Quarterly Communication on St. John Evangelist's Day' (1720); and the enactment of a law that the Grand Wardens should no longer be elected by the Grand Lodge but be appointed, together with a Deputy Grand Master, by the Grand Master after his installation."

^{2 &}quot;Laws of Honor," p. 286.

At the succeeding election in 1718 George Payne, Esq., was elected Grand Master. He was an Antiquary and scholar of considerable ability, and was well calculated to represent the Speculative character of the new association.

The new Wardens were Mr. John Cordwell and Mr. Thomas Morrice. The former is described as a Carpenter and the latter as a Stonecutter.

The choice of these officers was an evident concession to the old Operative element. But the election of Bro. Payne was a step forward in the progressive movement which a few years afterward led to the absolute freedom of Speculative Freemasonry from all connection with practical building. Noorthouck attests that "to the active zeal of Grand Master Payne the Society is under a lasting obligation for introducing brethren of noble rank into the Fraternity." ¹

From the very beginning the Grand Lodge had confined its selection of Grand Masters to persons of good social position, of learning, or of rank, though for a few years it occasionally conferred the Grand Wardenship on Operative Freemasons or on craftsmen of other trades.

Dr. John Theophilus Desaguliers was elected Grand Master, and Anthony Sayer and Thomas Morrice Grand Wardens in the year 1719. Desaguliers was a natural philosopher of much reputation and a Fellow of the Royal Society. Sayer had been the first Grand Master, and Morrice, who was a stonecutter or Operative Freemason, had been a Warden the previous year.

Payne was again elected Grand Master in 1720, and Thomas Hobby and Richard Ware were chosen as Grand Wardens. Hobby, like his predecessor, Morrice, was an Operative Freemason or Stonecutter, and Ware was a mathematician.

In 1721 the Duke of Montagu was elected Grand Master. He was the first nobleman who had served in that capacity. From that day to the present the throne of the Grand Lodge of England, as it is technically styled, has without a single exception been occupied by persons of royal or noble rank.

The office of Deputy Grand Master was created in this year, 1721, on June 24 according to Bro. Anderson, and the power of



¹ Noorthouck's "Constitutions anno 1784," p. 207. Entick ("Constitutions," 1756, p. 199) had made a similar remark.

choosing him as well as the Grand Wardens was taken from the Grand Lodge and invested in the Grand Master, a law which still continues in force.

Accordingly, the Duke of Montagu appointed John Beal, a physician, his Deputy, and Josiah Villeneau, who was an upholsterer, and again Thomas Morrice, his Wardens.

The Duke of Wharton, who was Grand Master in 1722, appointed Dr. Desaguliers his Deputy, and Joshua Timson and James Anderson his Wardens. Timson was a blacksmith and Anderson a clergyman, well-known afterwards as the Compiler of the first and second editions of the Book of Constitutions.

In 1723 the Earl of Dalkeith was Grand Master, Desaguliers again Deputy, and Francis Sorrel, Esq., and John Senex, a bookseller, Wardens.

From 1717 to 1722 the claims of the Operative Freemasons to hold a share of the offices had, as Gould ¹ remarks, been fairly recognized. The appointment of Stonecutters, Carpenters, and other mechanics as Grand Wardens had been a concession by the Speculative members to the old Operative element.

But in 1723 the struggle between the two, which is noticed in the records of the Society only by its results, ended in the complete victory of the former, who from that time limited the offices to persons of rank, of influence, or of learning. From the year 1723 no Operative Freemason or workman of any trade was ever appointed as a Warden. In the language of Gould, "they could justly complain of their total supercession in the offices of the Society."

This silent progress of events shows very clearly how the Freemasons who founded the Speculative Grand Lodge in 1717 on the principles and practices of Operative Freemasonry as they prevailed in the four Lodges of London, gradually worked themselves out of all connection with their Operative brethren and finally made Freemasonry what it now is, a purely Speculative, philosophical, and moral institution.

Upon the grouping of the four Lodges into one supervising body, the next step in the progress to pure Speculative Freemasonry was to prevent the formation of other Lodges which might be independent of the control of the Grand Lodge, and thus present an obstacle to the completion of the reformation.



¹ "Four Old Lodges," p. 33.

This could only be accomplished by a voluntary surrender on the part of the four Lodges, of their independency and a giving up of their privileges.

The conference at the "Apple Tree Tavern" in February, 1717, and that at the "Goose and Gridiron" in June of the same year, were what, at the present day, would be called mass-meetings of the Craft. They resembled in that respect the General Assembly spoken of in the old manuscript Constitutions, and every Freemason was required to attend if it were held within a reasonable distance, and if he had no satisfactory excuse for his absence.

Attendance at these conferences which resulted in the establishment of the Grand Lodge was open, not only to all the members of the four Lodges, but to other Freemasons who were not, to use a modern phrase, affiliated with any one of them.

"The Lodges, that is, the members of them," says Anderson, "with some old Brothers." Preston calls them more distinctively "some other old Brethren." Both of these phrases, of course, indicate that these "old Brethren" were not among the members of the four Lodges, but were Freemasons who had either, on account of their age, retired from having an active part in the labors of the Craft, or who had been members of other Lodges which were at that time no longer in existence.

At the preliminary meeting in February, they voted, says Preston, "the oldest Master Mason then present into the Chair." Anderson, writing in 1738, adds "now the Master of a Lodge," by which we suppose he meant that "the oldest Master Mason" who presided in 1717 became in 1738 the Master of a Lodge. We know of no other way of interpreting the significance of the word "now." They then and there "constituted themselves a Grand Lodge pro tempore in due form."

This "due form," in our opinion, could have amounted to no more than a formal declaration of the intention to establish a Grand Lodge on a definite plan,² which intention was



¹ In most of the Constitutions that distance is defined to be not more than fifty miles.

² According to the Regulations of 1721 (see "Constitutions," 1723, p. 61) the Grand Lodge in due form evidently was as follows: consisting of and formed by the Masters and Wardens of all the Regular Lodges upon record, with the Grand Master at their head, and his Deputy on his left hand, and the Grand Wardens in their proper places.

carried out in the following June by the election of a Grand Master and Wardens.

The Freemasons of America are familiar with the methods pursued in the organization of a Grand Lodge in a territory where none had previously existed. Here a certain number of Lodges, not less than three, assemble through their three principal officers and constitute a working Convention. This body of representatives of regular Lodges proceeds to the election of a Grand Master and other officers, directs the Lodges to surrender the Warrants under which they had been working to the Grand Lodges from which they had originally received them, and then issues new Charters to its own constituents. The new Grand Lodge thus becomes "an accomplished fact."

But this was not the method adopted in the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England in the year 1717. Instead of the representation of the four Lodges being restricted to the Masters and Wardens of each of these bodies, all the members of them met together, down to the youngest Entered Apprentice, together with Freemasons who were not affiliated with any Lodge.

The chair, according to Preston, in the preliminary meeting in February had been taken by the oldest Master Mason present. At this later meeting for final organization the oldest Master Mason, who at the same time was Master of one of the four Lodges, presided. Then the Grand Lodge was duly organized by the election of its first three officers.

But now it became necessary to secure the sovereignty of the new Grand Lodge as the future supervising body of the Craft. There was also seen to be a necessity for some plan to prevent any additional Lodges being established outside and without its authority, so that the system might be perfected in the future according to the method which was originally designed by its founders.

Almost the first regulation adopted at the meeting in June, 1717, was to effect these objects.

Hitherto, as we have already seen, the Operative Freemasons possessed a privilege derived from the Old Constitutions of the Gild (and which is formally set forth in the Harleian manuscript) of assembling in Lodges for the purpose of "making Masons" and doing so under very simple provisions. There was no



necessity for a Warrant or permission from a superior Masonic body to make such an assembly legal. 1

But now it was resolved that this privilege should be abolished. No number of Freemasons were hereafter to assemble as a Lodge without the consent of the Grand Lodge, this permission being expressed by the granting of a Warrant of Constitution or Charter authorizing such brethren to constitute or form themselves into a Lodge. Without such Warrant, says Preston, no Lodge should hereafter be deemed regular or constitutional.

From this regulation, however, the four Lodges which had coöperated in the formation of the Grand Lodge were excepted. They, so long as they existed, were to be the only Lodges working without a Warrant and deriving their authority to do so from "immemorial usage."

The effect of this regulation was to throw an impassable obstacle in the way of any new Lodge being formed which was not Speculative in its character and in perfect accord with the new system, from whose founders or their successors it was to derive its existence.

Hence this was the most weighty blow that had as yet been struck against the continuance of the Gild of purely Operative Freemasonry. No purely Operative nor half Operative and half Speculative Lodges, we may be sure, would thereafter be erected.

From this time all Lodges were to consist of Speculative Freemasons only. They were to form a part of the new non-Operative system, of which the first organized Grand Lodge was the head and exercised the sovereign power.

It is true that Preston tells us that long before this period a regulation had been adopted by which "the privileges of Masonry should no longer be restricted to Operative Masons, but extend to men of various professions, provided they were regularly approved and initiated into the Order." It is also well known that there hardly ever was a time in the history of Operative Freemasonry when Theoretic or non-Operative persons were not admitted into the Gild.

¹ Preston says, p. 210, "Illustrations of Masonry," 1812 edition: "A sufficient number of Masons met together within a certain district, with the consent of the sheriff or chief magistrate of the place, were impowered, at this time, to make Masons, and practice the rites of Masonry, without warrant of Constitution. The privilege was inherent in themselves as individuals; and this privilege is still enjoyed by the two old Lodges now extant, which act by immemorial constitution."



But this was taking a step farther, and a very long step, too. Membership in the new Society was no longer a privilege extended by courtesy to Theoretic Masons. It was to be a franchise of which they alone were to be possessors. Operative workmen, merely as such, were to be excluded. In other words, no Operative Craftsman was to be admitted into the Fraternity mainly because he was an Operative. That was an incident or quality of little or no importance. He was, on his admission, to lay aside his profession, and unite with the others in the furtherance of the purely Speculative design of the institution.

So it has continued to the present day. Thus it must continue as long as the system of Speculative Freemasonry shall last. Operative Freemasonry, "wounded in the house of its friends," has never recovered from the blow thus inflicted.

Operative Masonry, for building purposes, still lives and must always live to serve the needs of man.

But Operative Freemasonry, as a Gild, is dead beyond recovery.

It is impossible to say for how long a time the meetings of the Grand Lodge continued to be attended by all the members of the particular Lodges, or, in other words, when these assemblies ceased, like those of the old Operative Freemasons, to be mass-meetings of the Craft.

But the rapidly growing popularity of the new Order must have rendered such meetings very inconvenient because of the increase of members.

Anderson says that in 1718 "several old Brothers that had neglected the Craft visited the Lodges; some noblemen were also made Brothers and more new Lodges were constituted." 1

Noorthouck, writing in reference to the same period, says that the Free and Accepted Masons "now began visibly to gather strength as a body," ² and we are told that at the annual feast in 1721 the number of Lodges had so increased ³ that the General Assembly required more room, and therefore the Grand Lodge was on that occasion removed to Stationers' Hall, nor



¹ Anderson, "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 110.

² Noorthouck, "Constitutions," p. 207.

³ There were at that time twenty Lodges, and the number of Freemasons who attended the annual meeting and feast was one hundred and fifty.

did it ever afterward return to its old quarters at the "Goose and Gridiron Tavern."

This growth of numbers would alone be sufficient to suggest the convenience of changing the constitution of the Grand Lodge to provide for a change from the old mass-meeting of the Fraternity into a representative body.

This alteration was effected by the passage of a regulation dispensing with the attendance of the whole of the Craft at the annual meeting, and authorizing each Lodge to be represented by its Master and two Wardens.

We have no positive knowledge of the exact date when this regulation was adopted. It first appears in the "General Regulations" which were compiled by Grand Master Payne in 1720, and approved by the Grand Lodge in 1721. The twelfth of these Regulations is in these words:

"The Grand Lodge consists of, and is formed by, the Masters and Wardens of all the regular, particular Lodges upon record, with the Grand Master at their head, and his Deputy on his left hand, and the Grand Wardens in their proper places."

Preston says that the Grand Lodge having resolved that the four old Lodges should retain every privilege which they had collectively enjoyed by virtue of their immemorial rights, the members considered their attendance on the future Communications of the Grand Lodge unnecessary. They "therefore, like the other Lodges, trusted implicitly to their Master and Wardens, resting satisfied that no measure of importance would be adopted without their approbation." ¹

But he adds that the officers of the four old Lodges "soon began to discover" that the new Lodges might in time outnumber the old ones and encroach upon their privileges. They therefore formed a code of laws, the last clause of which provided that the Grand Lodge in making any new regulations should be bound by a careful observation of the old Landmarks.

It is unfortunate that in treating this early period of Masonic history Preston should be so careless and confused in his record of the order of things as to compel us to depend very much upon inference in settling the sequence of events.

1 "Illustrations of Masonry," 1812 edition, p. 213.



However, we think it may fairly be inferred from the remarks of Preston, and from what little we can collect from Anderson's brief notices, that the Grand Lodge continued to be a mass-meeting, attended by all the Craft, until the annual feast on the 24th of June, 1721. At that communication Anderson records that the Grand Lodge was composed of "Grand Master with his Wardens, the former Grand officers, and the Master and Wardens of the twelve Lodges." In all records of the later events he mentions the number of Lodges which were represented by their officers, though the Grand Feast still continued to be attended by as many Freemasons as desired to partake of the dinner and, we suppose, were willing to pay their share of the expense.

It was, therefore, we think, not till 1721 that the Grand Lodge assumed that form which made it a representative body, consisting of the Masters and Wardens of the particular Lodges, together with the officers of the Grand Lodge.

That form has ever since been retained in the organization of every Grand Lodge that has directly or indirectly sprung from the original body.

This result was another significant token of the separation that was steadily taking place between the Operative and the Speculative systems.

Hitherto we have been occupied with the consideration of the transactions recorded as having taken place at the annual meetings. We are now to inquire when these meetings began to be supplemented by Quarterly Communications.

Here the historical question presents itself, which, so far as we are aware, was not distinctly met and treated by any of our Masonic scholars before Bro. Mackey. They all seem to have taken it for granted on the naked authority of Anderson and Preston, that the Quarterly Communications were of the same date with the organization of the Grand Lodge in the year 1717.

Is this a fact? We must confess that on this subject a shadow of doubt has been cast that somewhat darkens our clearness of vision. Let us further examine the angles of this subject.



¹ "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 112.

² The only qualification for attendance on the feast was that the guests must be Freemasons: therefore waiting brethren were appointed to attend and serve at the tables, "for that no strangers must be there."—"Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 112.

Anderson says, and Preston repeats the statement, that at the preliminary meeting in February, 1717, at the "Apple Tree Tavern," it was resolved "to revive the Quarterly Communications."

But these two authorities (and they are the only ones that we have on the subject) differ in some of the details. These differences are important enough to throw a doubt on the truth of the statement Anderson and Preston have handed down to us.

Anderson says in one place that in February, 1717, they "forthwith revived the Quarterly Communications of the officers of Lodges called the Grand Lodge." ¹

Afterwards he says that at the meeting of June, 1717, Grand Master Sayer "commanded the Masters and Wardens of Lodges to meet the Grand officers every quarter in communication, at the place he should appoint in his summons sent by the Tyler." ²

Preston says that in February "it was resolved to revive the Quarterly Communications of the Fraternity." Immediately after he adds that in June the Grand Master "commanded the Brethren of the four Lodges to meet him and his Wardens quarterly in communication." 4

Thus, according to Preston, the Quarterly Communications were to apply to the whole body of the Fraternity; but Anderson restricted them to the Masters and Wardens of the Lodges.

The two statements do not agree. A mass-meeting of the whole Fraternity and a consultation of the Masters and Wardens of the Lodges are very different things.

But both may be in error in saying that the Quarterly Communications "were revived," for there is no notice of or allusion to Quarterly Communications in any of the old records which speak only of an annual General Assembly of the Craft, and sometimes perhaps occasional assemblies for special purposes.

There can be no doubt that such was the usage among the English Gilds of the Middle Ages, a usage which must have been applicable to the Freemasons as well as to other crafts. "The distinction," says J. Toulmin Smith, "between the gatherings (congregations) and general meetings (assemblies) is seen at a



¹ Anderson, "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 109.

² "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 110.

³ Preston, "Illustrations of Masonry," 12th edition, p. 209.

^{4&}quot;Illustrations of Masonry," 12th edition, p. 209.

glance in most of the ordinances. The Gild brethren were bound to gather together, at unfixed times, for special purposes; but besides these gatherings upon special summons, general meetings of the Gilds were held on fixed days in every year for the election of officers, holding their feasts, etc." 1

We do not see any likeness in these gatherings of local Gilds to the Quarterly Communications of the Grand Lodge spoken of by Anderson. The resemblance is rather to the monthly meetings of the particular Lodges as compared with the annual meeting of the Grand Lodge.

But if, as Anderson and Preston say, the Quarterly Communications were "forthwith revived" in 1717, it is singular that there is no record of any one having been held until December, 1720. After that date we find the Quarterly Communications regularly recorded by Anderson as taking place at the times appointed in the Regulations which were compiled in 1720 by Grand Master Payne, namely, "about Michaelmas, Christmas, and Lady Day," that is, in September, December, and March.²

The word "about" in the 12th Regulation permitted some latitude as to the precise day of meeting.

Accordingly, we find that Quarterly Communications were held in 1721 in March, September, and December; in 1722, in March, but the others appeared to have been neglected, perhaps in consequence of irregularities attendant on the illegal election of the Duke of Wharton³; in 1723 there were Quarterly Communications in April and November, and the December meeting was postponed to the following January; in 1724 they occurred in February and November; in 1725 in May, November, and December, and so on, but with greater regularity, in all the subsequent proceedings of the Grand Lodge as recorded in the Book of Constitutions by Anderson, and by his successors, Entick and Noorthouck, in the later editions.



^{1 &}quot;English Gilds," p. 128, note.

² The feast of St. Michael occurs Sept. 29; the festival of Lady Day, the Annunciation or announcement by the Angel to the Virgin—see Luke I, 28-38—is observed on March 25.

³ Philip, Duke of Wharton, objected to the reëlection of the Duke of Montague as Grand Master and although only a young member, twenty-two years of age, and not the Master of a Lodge, he induced some of the brethren at a meeting on June 24, 1722, to elect and install him Grand Master. The Duke of Montague did not approve this ambition but forgave it to the extent of installing the Duke of Wharton at the Grand Lodge Communication of January 17, 1723.

Let us look at the silence of the records in respect to Quarterly Communications from 1717 to 1720; then to the regular appearance of such records after that year. We must remember that in the latter year the provision for them was first inserted in the General Regulations compiled at that time by Grand Master Payne. Facing these facts we trust that we shall not be deemed too skeptical or too hypercritical, if we confess our doubt of the accuracy of Anderson, who has, whether willfully or carelessly we will not say, credited the establishment of these Quarterly Communications to Grand Master Sayer, when the honor, if there be any, properly belongs to Grand Master Payne.

The next subject that will attract our attention in this sketch of the early history of the Grand Lodge, is the method in which the laws which regulated the original Operative system were gradually modified and at length completely changed so as to be appropriate to the peculiar needs of a wholly Speculative society.

When the four old Lodges united, in the year 1717, in organizing a Grand Lodge, it is very evident that the only laws which governed them must have been the "Charges" contained in the manuscript Constitutions or such private regulations adopted by the Lodges, as were agreeable to them.

There was no other Masonic jurisprudence or code of laws known to the Operative Freemasons of England, at the beginning of the 18th century, than that which was embodied in these old Constitutions. These were familiar to the Operative Freemasons of that day, as they had been for centuries before to their predecessors.

Though never printed, copies of these manuscript Constitutions were common and were easily within reach. They were often copied, one from another—just as often, probably, as the wants of a new Lodge might require.

Beginning at the end of the 14th century, which is the date of the poetical Constitutions, which were first published by J. O. Halliwell-Phillips, copies continued to be made until the year 1714 or thereabouts, which is the date of the last one now extant, executed before the organization of the Grand Lodge.¹

¹ We take no notice here of the Krause manuscript which pretends to contain the Constitutions enacted by Prince Edwin, in 926, because Masonic students everywhere have not the least doubt that it is a forgery of comparatively recent times. This opinion is by no means intended to reflect upon the good faith of Bro. Krause of whose ability and sincerity there is the very highest esteem by the scholars of the Craft.



Now in all these written Constitutions, extending through a period of more than three centuries, there is a very wonderful conformity of character.

The poetic form which exists in the Regius manuscript was apparently never imitated, and all the later manuscript Constitutions now extant are in prose. But as Bro. Woodford has justly observed, they all "seem in fact to be clearly derived from the Masonic Poem, though naturally altered in their prose form, and expanded and modified through transmission and oral tradition, as well as by the lapse of time and the change of circumstances." 1

While these old Constitutions contained, with hardly any appreciable variation, the *Legend of the Craft*, which was sincerely believed by the old Operative Freemasons to be the true history of the rise and progress of the brotherhood, they embodied also that code of laws by which the Fraternity was governed during the whole period of its existence.

Though these Constitutions commenced, so far as we have any knowledge of them from personal inspection, at the close of the 14th century, we are not to admit that there were no earlier copies. Indeed, we have already shown that the Halliwell Poem, the Regius manuscript, whose probable date is 1390, is evidently a compilation from two other poems of an earlier date.

The Freemasons who were active about the time of the organization of the Grand Lodge held those old manuscript Constitutions, as their predecessors had done before them, in the greatest reverence. The fact that the laws which they set forth, like those of the Medes and Persians, had invested them with the luster of antiquity, and as they had always remained written, and had never been printed, the Craft looked upon them as their peculiar and private property and gave to them much of an esoteric character.

This estimate of the true nature of these documents led to a very unfortunate and deplorable destruction of many of them.

Grand Master Payne had in 1718 desired the brethren to bring to the Grand Lodge "any old writings and records concerning Masons and Masonry in order to show the usages of ancient times." These, it was suspected, were to be used in the prepara-



¹ Preface to Hughan's "Old Charges of British Freemasons," p. 13.

² Anderson, "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 110.

tion and publication of a contemplated Book of Masonic Constitutions, and the Freemasons became alarmed at the possible publicity of what they had always deemed to be secret.

Accordingly, in 1720, "at some private Lodges," says Anderson, "several valuable manuscripts (for they had nothing yet in print) concerning their Lodges, Regulations, Charges, Secrets, and Usages (particularly one writ by Mr. Nicholas Stone, the Warden of Inigo Jones) were too hastily burnt by some scrupulous brothers, that those papers might not fall into strange hands." ¹

Noorthouck, commenting on this instance of vandalism, which he styles an act of *felo de se* (suicide), says that it surely "could not proceed from zeal according to knowledge."

Of course, it was zeal without knowledge that led to this destruction, the effects of which are felt at this day by every student who attempts to write an authentic history of Freemasonry.

The object of Grand Master Payne in attempting to make a collection of these old writings was undoubtedly to enable him to frame a code of laws which should be founded on what Anderson calls the Gothic Constitutions. Several copies of these Constitutions were produced in the year 1718 and their information compiled.

The result of this labor was the production which under the title of "The Charges of a Free-Mason" was appended to the first edition of the *Book of Constitutions*.

This is the first code of laws set forth officially by the Speculative Grand Lodge of England, and thus the compilation becomes important as a historical document.

As to the date and the authorship of this code we have no other guide than that of inference.

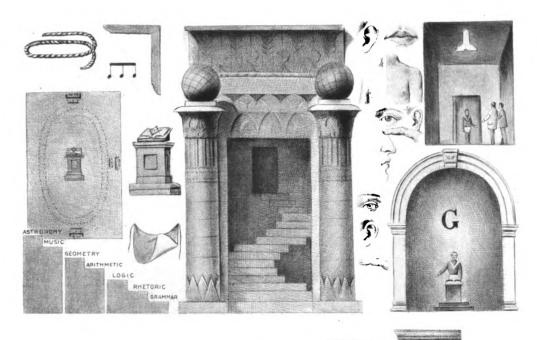
There can, however, be little hesitation in crediting the authorship to Payne and assigning the time of the compilation to the period of his Grand Mastership, which extended for a couple of terms, from June, 1718, to June, 1719, and in like manner from 1720 to 1721.

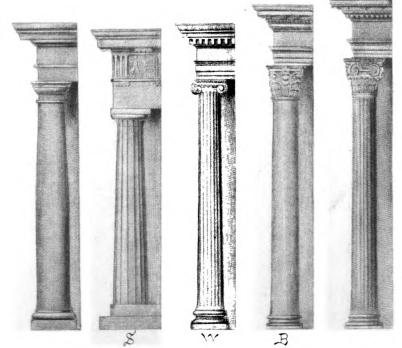
In the title to these "Charges" it is said that they have been "extracted from the ancient records of Lodges beyond sea and of those in England, Scotland, and Ireland, for the use of the Lodges in London."

¹ Anderson, "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 111.



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Now this admirably coincides with the passage in Anderson in which it is said that at the request of Grand Master Payne, in the year 1718, "several old copies of the Gothic Constitutions were produced and collated."

We may in fact thus identify the collation or compilation of the Gothic Constitutions in 1718 with the "Charges of a Free-Mason," published in the first edition of the *Book of Constitutions*.

Nor do we feel any hesitation in crediting this collation of the old Constitutions and the compilation, out of it, of the "Charges" to Payne, whose genius lay in that way and who again exercised it, two years afterward, in the compilation of the "General Regulations," which took the place of the "Charges" as the law of the Speculative Grand Lodge.

The *Diary* of Dr. Stukeley, who was initiated in January, 1721, records for us that on June 24, 1721, at a meeting of the Grand Lodge, "the Gd. Mr. Mr. Pain read over a new sett of articles to be observ'd."

The valuable services of George Payne in the beginning, the earliest era of Speculative Freemasonry, have not received from our historians the appreciation which is their just due. His reputation has been overshadowed by that of Desaguliers. Both labored much and successfully for the infant institution. But we should never forget that the pioneer work of Payne in the formation of its jurisprudence was as important as was that of Desaguliers in the making of its ritual. Just how much he had to do with the latter is difficult to determine. Bro. Mackey was inclined to give Desaguliers much credit for that work and his position as a leading scientist suggests that the monitorial lectures owe a great deal of their high quality to his efforts.

Of the relative labors of Brothers Payne, Anderson, and Desaguliers, it is said by Bro. Gould that "All three, indeed, had a share in the compilation of the first Book of Constitutions. Payne drafted the Regulations, Anderson 'digested' the general subject matter, and Desaguliers wrote the Preface or Dedication." ²



¹ Dr. Oliver says in his "Revelations of a Square," p. 8, "And a few years later Bro. Desaguliers proposed in Grand Lodge that a code of laws should be drawn up for the better government of the Craft. Accordingly, at the annual assembly on St. John's Day, 1721, he produced thirty-eight regulations," but we are inclined to think this is only a slip of the pen and that while the good Brother wrote the name Desaguliers he had George Payne in mind.

² "Concise History of Freemasonry," Robert F. Gould, 1904, p. 372.

But, to resume the history of the progress of Masonic law. The adoption in 1718 of the "Charges of a Free-Mason," with the direction that they shall be read as the existing law of the Fraternity "at the making of new brethren," is a very significant proof of what has before been suggested that at the time of the so-called "Revival" there was no positive intention to wholly separate the Speculative from the Operative system.

These "Charges" are, as they must necessarily have been, originating as they did in the Old Constitutions, a code of regulations adapted only to a Fraternity of Operative Freemasons and wholly unfit for a Society of Speculatives, such as the institution afterwards became.

Thus Masters were not to receive Apprentices unless they had sufficient employment for them; the Master was to oversee the lord's or employer's work, and was to be chosen from the most expert of the Fellow Crafts; the Master was to undertake the lord's work for reasonable pay; no one was to receive more wages than he deserved; the Master and the Craftsmen were to receive their wages meekly; were to honestly finish their work and not to put them to task which had been accustomed to journey; nor was one Freemason to supplant another in his work.

The Operative feature is very plain in these laws. They are, it is true, supplemented by other regulations as to conduct in the Lodge, in the presence of strangers, and at home; and these are as applicable to a Speculative as they are to an Operative Freemason.

But the whole spirit, and, for the most part, the very language of these "Charges," is found in the Old Constitutions of the Operative Freemasons.

They have, however, been always accepted as the foundation of the law of Speculative Freemasonry, though originally adopted at a time when the Society had not yet completely thrown over its Operative character.

But to apply them to an exposition of the laws of Speculative Freemasonry, and to make them applicable to the government of the Order in its purely Speculative condition, modern Masonic writers have found it necessary to give to the language of the

1 See the title of the "Charges" in the first edition of the "Book of Constitutions," p. 49.



"Charges" a figurative or symbolic meaning, a process that we suspect was not expected by Payne or his fellow students of the Craft.

Thus, to "work" is now interpreted as meaning to practice the ritual. The Lodge is at "work" when it is conferring a degree. To receive wages is to be advanced from a lower to a higher degree. To supplant another in the "work," is for one Lodge to interfere with the candidates of another.

In this way Statutes intended originally for the government of a body of workmen have by judicial ingenuity been rendered applicable to a Society of moralists.

The adoption of these "Charges" was a concession to the Operative element of the new Society. The Grand Lodge of 1717 was the successor or the outcome of an old and different association. It brought into its organization the relics of that old association, nor was it prepared in its raw and unsettled condition to cast aside all the customs and habits of that ancient body.

Hence the first laws enacted by the Speculative Grand Lodge were borrowed from and founded on the manuscript Constitutions of the Operative Freemasons. But the unfitness of such a system of government to the new organization was very soon discovered.

Two years afterwards Payne, untiring in his earnest efforts to perfect the institution, which had honored him twice with its highest office, compiled a new code of laws which were perfectly applicable to a Speculative Society.

This new code, under the title of the "General Regulations," was compiled by Payne in 1720, and having been approved by the Grand Lodge in 1721, was inserted in the first edition of the Book of Constitutions, published in 1723.

Anderson says that he has compared them with and reduced them to the ancient records and immemorial usages of the Fraternity, and digested them into this new method with several proper explications for the use of the lodges in and about London and Westminster.¹

There certainly is some evidence of the handiwork of Anderson in some items which in all probability were of a later date

¹ This expression is in the title prefixed to the General Regulations, in 1st edition of "Book of Constitutions," p. 58.



than that of the original compilation. But as a body of law, it must be considered as the work of Payne.

This code has ever since remained as the groundwork or basis of the system of Masonic jurisprudence. Very few changes have ever been made in its principles. Additional laws have since been enacted, not only by the mother Grand Lodge, but by those which have come from it, yet the spirit of the original code has always been respected and preserved. In fact, this code has been regarded almost in the light of a set of landmarks, whose sanctity could not legally be violated.

George Payne, the second and fourth Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England, is therefore justly entitled to the distinguished reputation of being the lawgiver of modern Freemasonry.

If we compare the "Charges" adopted in 1718 with the Regulations approved in 1721, we will be struck with the great change that must have taken place in the constitution and character of a society that thus required so important a change in its principles of government.

The "Charges" were, as has already been shown, fitting to an association in which the Operative element was largest. The Regulations are appropriate to one wholly Speculative in its design, and from which the Operative element has been thoroughly erased.

The adoption of the Regulations in 1721 was therefore conclusive proof that at that period the Grand Lodge and the Lodges under its jurisdiction had entirely severed all connection with Operative Freemasonry.

We may, indeed, make this the epoch to which we are to assign the real birth of pure Speculative Freemasonry in England.

There were, however, many Lodges outside of the London limit which still preserved the Operative character, and many years elapsed before the Speculative system was universally spread throughout the kingdom.

The minutes of a few of these bodies have been preserved or recovered after having been lost. They exhibit for the most part, as late as the middle of the 18th century, the characteristics which

¹ This subject will be more fully discussed, and some of these later additions will be pointed out, when we come, in a future chapter, to the consideration of the making of the Degrees.



distinguished all English Masonic Lodges before the establishment of the Grand Lodge. Their membership consisted of an admixture of Operative and Theoretic Freemasons. But the business of the Lodge was directed to the necessities and inclinations of the former class.

A common feature in these minutes is the record of the indentures or contracts of Apprentices for seven years, to Master Masons who were members of the Lodge.

Speculative Freemasonry, which took rapid growth in London after its severance from the Operative Lodges, made slower progress in the provinces.

Of the rapidity of growth in the city and its suburbs we have very satisfactory evidence in the increase of Lodges as shown in the official lists which were printed at occasional periods. Thus, in 1717, as we have seen, there were but four Lodges engaged in the organization of the Grand Lodge. These were the only Lodges then in London. At least no evidence has ever been produced that there were any others. These were all original Operative Lodges.

Anderson says that "more new Lodges were constituted" in 1719. If he had been accurate in the use of his language, the qualifying adverb "more" would indicate that "new Lodges" had also been constituted the year before the one he mentions.

June, 1721, twelve Lodges were represented in the Grand Lodge by their Masters and Wardens, showing, if there were no absentees, that eight new Lodges had been added to the Fraternity since 1717.

In September of the same year Anderson records the presence of the representatives of sixteen Lodges. Either four new Lodges had been added to the list between June and September, or what is more likely, some were absent in the meeting of the former month.

At the Communication of March, 1722, the officers of twenty-four Lodges are recorded as being present, and in April, 1723, the number had increased to thirty.

But the number of Lodges stated by Anderson to have been represented at the Communications of the Grand Lodge does not appear to furnish any absolute showing of the number of Lodges in existence. Thus, while the records show that in April,



1723, thirty Lodges were represented in the Grand Lodge, the names of the Masters and Wardens of only twenty Lodges are signed to the approval of the *Book of Constitutions*, which is appended to the first edition of that work published in the same year.

Bro. Gould calls this "the first List of Lodges ever printed," ¹ but we believe it is not worthy of that title, if by a "List of Lodges" is meant a roll of all those actually in existence at the time. Now, if this were a correct list of the Lodges which were on the roll of the Grand Lodge at the time, what has become of the ten necessary to make up the number of thirty which are reported to have been represented in April, 1723, besides some others which we may suppose to have been absent?

Anderson did not think it worth while to explain the doubtful situation, but from 1723 onward we have no further difficulty in tracing the numerical progress of the Lodges and incidentally the increase in the number of members of the Fraternity.

Engraved lists of Lodges began in 1723 to be published by authority of the Grand Lodge, and to the correctness of these we may safely trust, as showing the general progress of the Institution.

The first of these lists is "printed for and sold by Eman Bowen, Engraver, in Aldersgate St." It purports to be a list of Lodges in 1723, and the number of them amounts to fifty-one. In 1725 Pine,² who was in some way connected it is supposed, with Bowen, issued a list for that year, which contains, not the names, for the Lodges at that time had no names, but the taverns or places of meeting of sixty-four Lodges, fifty-six of which were in London or its vicinity.

On November 27, 1723, the Grand Lodge commenced in its minute book an official list of the Lodges, which seems, says Bro. Gould, "to have been continued until 1729." The Lodges are entered, says the same authority, in ledger form, two Lodges to a page, and beneath them appear the names of members.

¹ The "Four Old Lodges," p. 2.

² John Pine seems to have been the engraver of the lists of Lodges from 1723, the maker of the frontispiece to the Constitutions of 1723, and of the pictures in the 1738 edition of the Constitutions. He was active in the official circles as one well known and reliable, and deserves mention for his zeal and ability in undertaking to engrave and print in three days the minutes of the Quarterly Communications, no small task even now.

This list contains seventy-seven Lodges. Supposing, as Gould does, that the list extended to 1729, it shows an increase in twelve years of seventy-three Lodges, without counting the Lodges which had become extinct or been merged into other Lodges.

In the next official list contained in the minute book of the Grand Lodge, and which extends to 1732, the number of Lodges given is one hundred and two, or an increase in fifteen years of ninety-eight Lodges, again leaving out the extinct ones.

These examples are sufficient to show the steady and rapid growth of the Society during the period of its infancy.

There is, however, another historical point which demands consideration. At what time did the formal constitution or the actual ceremonial, forming or shaping of Lodges begin?

At this our own day it is a settled law and practice, that before a Lodge of Freemasons can take its position as one of the constituent members of a Grand Lodge, a certain form or ceremony must be undergone by which it acquires all its legal rights. This form or ceremony is called its Constitution, and the authority for this must come from the Grand Lodge, either directly, as in America, or indirectly, through the Grand Master, as in England, and is called the Warrant or Constitution.

The Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of England, which are in force at the present day, say: "In order to avoid irregularities, every new Lodge should be solemnly constituted by the Grand Master with his Deputy and Wardens." 1

This regulation has been in force at least since January, 1723, the very words of the clause above quoted having been taken from the form of constitution practiced by the Duke of Wharton, who was Grand Master in that year, and which form is appended to the first edition of the *Book of Constitutions*.

Anderson says that in 1719 "more new Lodges were constituted"; and Preston states that at the meeting of the Grand Lodge in 1717 a regulation was agreed to that "every Lodge, except the four old Lodges at this time existing, should be legally authorized to act by a warrant from the Grand Master for the time being, granted to certain individuals by petition, with the



¹ "Constitutions of the Ancient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons," p. 124.

² Anderson, "Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 110.

consent and approbation of the Grand Lodge in communication; and that without such warrant no Lodge should be hereafter deemed regular or constitutional." 1

Now we will agree that on the establishment of the new Grand Lodge, when the only Lodge then existing in London had united in the enterprise of modifying their old and decaying system, and of renovating and strengthening it by a closer union, it may be fairly conceded that the members must, at a very early period, have come to the agreement that no new members should be admitted into the Society unless consent had been previously obtained for their admission. This would naturally be the course pursued by any association for the purpose of self-preservation from the annoyance of unsuitable companions.

Let us suppose any number of Craftsmen availing themselves of the privilege of assembling as Freemasons in a Lodge, which privilege had hitherto been unlimited and, as Preston says, was inherent in them as individuals, and which was guaranteed to them by the old Operative Constitutions. There is, we think, no doubt that such a Lodge would not have been admitted into the new Fraternity in consequence of this impulsive and self-acting formation.

The new society would not recognize that Lodge as a part of its organization, at least until it had made an application and been accepted as a copartner in the concern.

The primitive Lodges which are said by Anderson to have been "constituted" between the years 1717 and 1723 may or may not have originated in this manner. There is no record one way or the other to settle the question.

However, we are convinced that it is quite certain that the present method of constituting Lodges was not adopted until a regulation to that effect was enacted in 1721. This regulation is found among those laws which were compiled by Payne in 1720, and approved the following year by the Grand Lodge.

This rule is a part of the eighth regulation. We find it is laid down that "if any Set or Number of Masons shall take upon themselves to form a Lodge without the Grand Master's warrant, the regular Lodges are not to countenance them nor own them as fair brethren and duly formed" until the Grand Master

¹ "Illustrations of Masonry," p. 210, 12th edition.



"approve of them by his warrant, which must be specified to the other Lodges, as the custom is when a new Lodge is to be registered in the list of Lodges."

This regulation was followed in 1723 by a form or "manner of constituting new Lodges," which was practiced by the Duke of Wharton when Grand Master, and which was probably arranged for him by Dr. Desaguliers, who was his Deputy.

To us it would seem, then, that new Lodges were not constituted by warrant until the year 1721, the date of the Regulation, nor constituted in form until 1723, under the Duke of Wharton. Prior to that time, if we may infer from the phraseology of the Regulation, Lodges when accepted as regular were said to be "formed," and were registered in the "List of Lodges." This inference gets strength from the authentic records of the period.

In an article published in Mackey's National Freemason in 1873 (vol. ii, p. 288), Bro. Hughan said "that it is a fact that no constituted Lodge dates at an earlier period than the Revival of Masonry, 1717." Commenting on this statement, Bro. Mackey says, "I suspect my learned brother wrote these lines currente calamo, with a running pen, and without his usual caution. It will be seen from the text that there is no record of any constituted Lodge dating prior to 1721."

Bro. Hughan replies to the foregoing as follows: "Concerning warrants it should be stated that these charters, so well known to the Fraternity since 1750 in England (but much earlier in Ireland), were not issued originally by the premier Grand Lodge of England, but Brethren who wished to be constituted into a Lodge petitioned the Grand Master, and on his approval of their prayer a day would be fixed for its constitution, and certified accordingly. In the provinces, a Brother would be deputed to constitute such a Lodge by a document signed by the requisite authority, which was a kind of Warrant, but did not nominate the Worshipful Masters and Wardens, as since the period mentioned has been the case. The fact of constitution made the Lodge regular, but there were numerous Lodges which did not avail themselves of that favor, and so were irregular, from the Grand Lodge point of view, though as much entitled then to continue their meetings as they were before the Grand Lodge was formed.



It is impossible now to decide what Lodges joined the new organization between 1717 and 1721; hence my remark which is referred to in the above comment."

In the earlier "Lists of Lodges" authoritatively issued, there is no mention of the date of Constitution of the Lodges. In all the later lists the date of Constitution is given. In none of them, however, is there a record of any Lodge having been constituted prior to the year 1721. Thus, in Pine's list for 1740, engraved by order of the Grand Officers, and which contains the names and numbers of one hundred and eighty-one Lodges, four are recorded as having been constituted in 1721, five in 1722, and fourteen in 1723. No Lodge is recorded there as having been constituted between the years 1717 and 1721.

We find it is then very clear that the system of constituting Lodges was not adopted until the latter year; that it was another result of the legal labors of Payne in legislating for the new Society, and another and an important step in the separation of Speculative from Operative Freemasonry.

We next approach the important and highly interesting subject of the early ritual of the new institution. But this will demand for its full discussion the employment of a distinct chapter.



CHAPTER SEVENTY-SIX

THE EARLY RITUAL OF SPECULATIVE FREEMASONRY



HE ritual is an important part of the organization of Speculative Freemasonry. That ritual of ours is not a mere garment intended to cover the institution and conceal its body from unlawful inspection. It is the body itself and the very life of the institution. Erase from Freemasonry all trace of a ritual and you make

it a mere lifeless mass. The quality of Freemasonry as a benevolent or as a social association might continue, but all its pretensions as a speculative system of science and philosophy would be lost.

As a definition of this important and indispensable element in the Masonic system, it may be said that the ritual is properly the approved legal method of administering the forms of initiation into the Society, comprising not only the ceremonies but also the explanatory lectures, the catechismal or questioning tests, and the methods of recognition.

Every secret society, that is to say, every society exclusive in its character, confining itself to a particular class of persons, and isolating itself by its private organization from other associations and from mankind in general, must necessarily have some formal mode of admission, some meaning in that form which would need explanation, and some method by which its members could maintain their privacy and distinction.

Every secret society must, then, from the peculiar necessity of its organization, be provided with some sort of a ritual, whether it be simple or complex.

The Operative Freemasonry of the Middle Ages is acknowledged to have been a secret and exclusive Society or Gild of architects and builders, who concealed the secret processes of their art from all who were not accepted workers with them.



As a secret association, the old Operative Freemasons must have possessed a ritual. We have, to support this theory, not only logical inference but conclusive historical evidence.

German archæologists have given us the examination or catechism which formed a part of the ritual of the German Steinmetzen or Stonecutters.

The Sloane manuscript, No. 3329, contains the catechism used by the Operative Freemasons of England in the 17th century. A copy of this manuscript has already been given in a preceding part of the present work, and it is therefore unnecessary to reproduce it here.

As the Sloane manuscript has been assigned to a period between 1640 and 1700, we may safely conclude that it contains the ritual then in use among the English Operative Freemasons. At a later period it may have suffered considerable changes, but we infer that the ritual exposed in that manuscript was the foundation of the one which was in use by the Operative Lodges which united in the formation of the Grand Lodge in the year 1717.

If the new Society did not hesitate to adopt, at first, the old laws of the Operative institution, it is not at all probable that it would have rejected the ritual then in use and framed a new one. Until the Grand Lodge was securely seated in power, and the Operative element entirely wiped out, it would have been easier to use the old Operative ritual. In time, as the Operative laws were replaced by others more fitting to the character of the new Order, so the simple Operative ritual must have given way to the more ornate one adapted to the designs of Speculative Freemasonry. But during the earlier years of the Grand Lodge, this old Operative ritual continued to be used by the Lodges under its jurisdiction.

The precise ritual used at that time is perhaps lost beyond recovery, so that we have no direct, authentic account of the forms of initiation, yet by a careful collation and comparison of the historical material now in possession of the Fraternity, we may unravel the web, to all surface appearance hopelessly entangled, and arrive at something like historic truth.

It was not until 1721 that by the approval of the "Charges" which had been compiled the year before by Grand Master



Payne, the Grand Lodge took the first bold and decisive step toward the total wiping out of the Operative element, and the building upon its ruins of a purely Speculative institution.

The ritual used by the four old Lodges must have been very simple. Probably it consisted of little more than a brief and unimpressive ceremony of admission, the communication of certain words and signs, and instruction in a catechism derived from that which is contained in the Sloane manuscript. But we do not doubt that this catechism, brief as it is, was greatly modified and abridged by the lapse of time, the defects of memory, and the impossibility of accurately transmitting oral or mouth-to-ear teachings over any considerable length of time.

We think it not unlikely that Dr. Desaguliers, the great Masonic philosopher and ritualist of the day, may have begun to arrange the new ritual about the same time that Payne, the great lawmaker of Freemasonry, began to compile his new rules for the Craft. What this ritual was we can only judge by inference, by comparison, and by careful analysis, just as Champollion deciphered the Egyptian hieroglyphics by a critical study of the three inscriptions of the Rosetta Stone.¹

For this purpose we have a very competent supply of documents which we may employ in a similar comparison and analysis of the primitive ritual of the Speculative Freemasons.

Thus we have had the book called *The Grand Mystery*, which was published just a year after the appearance of the first edition of Anderson's *Book of Constitutions*.²

Dr. Oliver, it is true, calls this production a "catchpenny." ⁸ But it probably contains some shadowing forth of what was the

- ¹ A basaltic slab or piece of trap-rock found in 1799 near Rosetta, a small city on the Nile, Egypt. This stone is now in the British Museum and being engraved with inscriptions in various alphabets and languages provided a key, difficult to use but sufficient, to unlock the history hidden in the hieroglyphics of Egyptian monuments.
- ² The earliest spurious catechism, called "A Mason's Examination," appeared in "The Flying Post" or "Post Master," April 11-13, 1723.
- ³ "Revelations of a Square," chap. ii, note 6. But in a work that came from the press after Oliver's death entitled "The Discrepancies of Freemasonry," published by Hogg & Co., in 1874 (p. 79), he treats it with more respect, and says that it was the examination or lecture used by the Craft in the 17th century, the original of which, in the handwriting of Elias Ashmole, was given to Anderson when he made his collections for the history contained in the "Book of Constitutions." All this is possibly correct, but as Oliver must have got his information from some traditional source in his own possession solely, and as he has cited no authentic authority, we can hardly make use of it as a historical fact.



ritual at the time of its publication. When, a few years afterward, Samuel Prichard published his book entitled *Masonry Dissected*, which is evidently based on *The Grand Mystery*, and in fact an enlargement of it, showing some developments which had taken place in the ceremonies, Bro. Martin Clare ¹ replied to it in the pamphlet entitled *A Defense of Masonry*.

In this work it will be remarked that Bro. Clare does not directly deny the accuracy of Prichard's formulas, but only attempts to prove, which he does very successfully, that the ceremonies as they are described by Prichard were neither "absurd nor pernicious."

The truth is that Bro. Clare's *Defense* is a very learned and interesting interpretation of the symbols and ceremonies which were described by Prichard, and might have been written, just in the same way, if Bro. Clare had selected the ritual as it was then framed on which to found his comments. Krause accepted both of these works, as he gave them a place in his great essay on *The Three Oldest Documents of the Masonic Brotherhood*.

As for ourselves, we are disposed to take these and similar productions with some grains of allowance, yet not altogether rejecting them as utterly worthless. From such works we may obtain many valuable suggestions, when they are judiciously analyzed.

Krause thinks that *The Grand Mystery* was the production of one of the old Freemasons, who was an Operative builder and a man not without some learning. This is probably a correct supposition. At all events, we are willing to take the work as a correct exposition, substantially, of the condition of the ritual at the time when it was published, which was seven years after what was called the "Revival" in London. It will give us an idea of the earliest ritual accepted by the Speculative Freemasons from their Operative brethren, and used until the genius of such ritualists as Desaguliers invented something more worthy.

Adopting it then as the very nearest approach to the first ritual of the Speculative Freemasons, it will not be an unacceptable gift, nor useless in our studies of Masonic ceremonies. It has

¹ This brother was a London schoolmaster, a Fellow of the Royal Society. His "Defense of Masonry" appeared without the author's name in 1730. The work was reprinted as a part of the 1738 edition of the "Book of Constitutions," and has also been published by the "Lodge of Research," No. 2429, Leicester, England, 1907, in facsimile with notes.



not often been reprinted, and the original edition of 1724 is very scarce. We shall make use of the almost facsimile imitation of that edition printed in 1867 by the Masonic Archæological Society of Cincinnati, and under the supervision of Brother Enoch T. Carson, from whose valuable library the original exemplar was obtained. The title page of the pamphlet reads as follows:

"The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover'd. Wherein are the several Questions, put to them at their Meetings and Installations: As also the Oath, Health, Signs and Points to know each other by. As they were found in the Custody of a Free-Mason who Dyed suddenly. And now Publish'd for the Information of the Publick. London: Printed for T. Payne near Stationer's-Hall 1724. (Price Six Pence)."

THE CATECHISM.2

- 1. Q. Peace be here.
 - A. I hope there is.
- 2. Q. What a-Clock is it?
 - A. It is going to Six or going to Twelve.³
- 3. Q. Are you very busy? 4
 - A. No.
- 4. Q. Will you give or take?
 - A. Both; or which you please.
- 5. Q. How go Squares? 5
 - A. Straight.
- ¹ At the death of Bro. Carson, 1899, his famous library was acquired by Bro. Samuel C. Lawrence at whose death, 1911, it was bequeathed to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.
- ² The object of this reprint being only to give the reader some idea of what was the earliest form of the ritual that we possess, the Preface, the Freemason's Oath, A Freemason's Health and the signs to know a Freemason have been omitted as being unnecessary to that end. The questions have been numbered here only for facility of reference in our future remarks.
- ² This may be supposed to refer to the hours of labor of Operative Freemasons who commenced work at six in the morning and went to their noon-meal at twelve. This is the first indication that this was a catechism originally used by Operative Freemasons.
- Otherwise, "Have you any work?" Krause suggests that it was the question addressed to a traveling Fellow who came to the Lodge. "Every Mason," say the Old Constitutions, "shall receive or cherish strange Fellows when they come over the Country and sett them on work."—Lansdowne manuscript.
- ⁵ Halliwell, in his Dictionary, cites "How gang squares?" as meaning "How do you do?"
 He also says that "How go the squares?" means, how goes on the game, as chess, checkers or draughts,
 the board being full of squares. Krause adopts this latter meaning of the phrase, but Mackey preferred the former.



- 6. Q. Are you Rich or Poor?
 - A. Neither.
- 7. Q. Change me that.1
 - A. I will.
- 8. Q. In the name of, &c., are you a Mason?
- 9. Q. What is a Mason?
 - A. A Man begot of a Man, born of a woman, Brother to a king.
- 10. Q. What is a Fellow?
 - A. A Companion of a Prince.
- 11. Q. How shall I know that you are a Free-Mason?
 - A. By Signs, Tokens, and Points of my Entry.
- 12. Q. Which is the Point of your Entry?
 - A. I hear³ and conceal, under the penalty of having my Throat cut, or my Tongue pull'd out of my Head.
- 13. Q. Where was you made a Free-Mason?
 - A. In a just and perfect Lodge.
- 14. Q. How many make a Lodge?
 - A. God and the Square with five or seven right and perfect Masons, on the highest Mountains, or the lowest Valleys in the world.⁴
- 15. Q. Why do Odds make a Lodge?
 - A. Because all Odds are Men's Advantage.⁵
- ¹ Here it is probable that the grip was given and interchanged. Bros. Krause and Mackey suspected that there was here a mutilation of the catechism. The answer "I will" and the expression "In the name of, &c.," are connected with the giving of the grip. The expression "Change me that" simply requests an explanation, "change" being of old in England used for "exchange." The answer to the question "Are you a Mason?" is omitted, and then the catechism goes on with the question "What is a Mason?"
- ² The omission here can not be supplied. Perhaps it was a part of the formula of giving the grip. Krause suggests that the words thus omitted by the editor of the catechism might be "In the name of the Pretender" or probably "In the name of the King and the Holy Roman Catholic Church." But the former explanation would give the catechism too modern an origin and the latter would carry it too far back. However, that would suit the theory of Dr. Krause. Bro. Mackey rejected both suggestions but was unable to offer any substitute except "In the name of God and the Holy St. John." We may easily assume the missing sentence or word to have been of the nature of a password.
- ² The Sloane manuscript, in which a similar answer occurs, says, "I heal and conceal," "to heal" being the old English for "to hide." Clearly the word "hear" is a printer's error.
- ⁴ Krause thinks that in this answer an old and a new ritual are mixed. God and the Square he assigns to the former, the numbers five and seven to the latter. But the Harleian manuscript requires five to make a legal Lodge.
- ⁵ We must not suppose that this was derived from the Kabbalists. The doctrine that God delights in odd numbers, "numero Deus impare gaudet" (Virgil, Aeneid, viii), is as early as the oldest of the ancient mythologies. It is the foundation of all the numerical symbolism of Speculative Freemasonry. We here see that it was observed in the oldest ritual.



- A. The Lodge of St. John. 1
- 17. Q. How does it stand?
 - A. Perfect East and West, as all Temples do.
- 18. Q. Where is the Mason's Point? 2
 - A. At the East-Window, waiting at the Rising of the Sun, to set his men at work.
- 19. Q. Where is the Warden's Point?
 - A. At the West-Window, waiting at the Setting of the Sun to dismiss the Entered Apprentices.
- 20. Q. Who rules and governs the Lodge, and is Master of it?
 - A. Irah,
 - or the Right Pillar.

Iachin

- 21. Q. How is it govern'd?
 - A. Of Square and Rule.
- 22. Q. Have you the Key of the Lodge?
 - A. Yes, I have.
- 23. Q. What is its virtue?
 - A. To open and shut, and shut and open.
- 24. Q. Where do you keep it?
 - A. In an Ivory Box, between my Tongue and my Teeth, or within my Heart, where all my Secrets are kept.
- 25. Q. Have you the Chain to the Key?
 - A. Yes, I have.
- 26. Q. How long is it?
 - A. As long as from my Tongue to my Heart.
- ¹ This hieroglyphic appears to have been the early sign for a Lodge, as the "oblong square" is at the present day.
- ² Bro. Mackey held that this was a printer's mistake, which has been faithfully copied. He would read it "Where is the Master's point?" The next question supports his conviction. The Master sets the Craft to work, the Warden dismisses them. Compare the modern rituals.
- ³ Various have been the guesses as to the meaning of the word "Irah." Bro. Johann A. Schneider (born 1755, died 1816, a scholarly member of the Lodge Archimedes at Altenburg, Germany), believing that modern Freemasonry was instituted to secure the restoration of the House of Stuart, supposed the letters of the word to be the initials of the Latin sentence "Iacobus Redibit Ad Herditatem" James shall return to his inheritance. Krause thinks it the anagram of Hiram, and he rejects another supposition that it is the Hebrew "Irah," reverence or the fear of God. The wonted corruption of proper names in the old Masonic manuscripts makes Irah a sufficiently near approximation to Hiram. The German Steinmetzen called Tubal Cain "Walcan."
- Speaking of tests like this, Dr. Oliver wisely says: "These questions may be considered trivial, but in reality they were of great importance and included some of the profoundest mysteries of the Craft. . . . A single Masonic question, how puerile soever it may appear, is frequently in the hands of an expert Master of the Art, the depository of most important secrets." See "The Masonic Tests of the Eighteenth Century" in his "Golden Remains," vol. iv, pp. 14, 15.



- 27. Q. How many precious Jewels?
 - A. Three: a square Asher, a Diamond, and a Square.
- 28. Q. How many Lights?
 - A. Three; a Right East, South and West.²
- 29. Q. What do they represent?
 - A. The Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.³
- 30. Q. How many Pillars?
 - A. Two; Iachin and Boaz.
- 31. Q. What do they represent?
 - A. Strength and Stability of the Church in all Ages.4
- 32. Q. How many Angles in St. John's Lodge?
 - A. Four bordering on Squares. A.
- 33. Q. How is the Meridian found out?
 - A. When the Sun leaves the South and breaks in at the West-End of the Lodge.
- 34. Q. In what part of the Temple was the Lodge kept?
 - A. In Solomon's Porch,⁵ at the West-End of the Temple, where the two Pillars were set up.
- 35. Q. How many Steps belong to a right Mason?
 - A. Three.
- 36. Q. Give me the Solution.
 - A. I will . . . The Right Worshipful, Worshipful Master and Worshipful Fellows of the Right Worshipful Lodge from whence I came, greet you well.
 - Response That Great God to us greeting, be at this our meeting, and with the Right Worshipful Lodge from whence you came, and you are.⁶
- ¹ Doubtless meant for "ashlar," squared stone. Halliwell-Phillips gives an example of it from an old contract for the construction of a dormitory at Durham, 1398, where the Craftsman undertakes to build a wall, the outside being "achiler" and the inside "roghwall."
- ² The Bauhütten or Operative Lodges of the Germans probably had, says Krause, only three windows corresponding to the cardinal points, and the three principal officers of the Lodge had their seats near them so as to obtain the best light for their labors.
- ³ The earliest Freemasonry of the new Grand Lodge was Christian. The change did not occur until the adoption of the "Old Charges" as in Anderson's first edition.
- ⁴ This resembles the German Steinmetzen's catechism: "What is the Strength of our Craft?" Strength continued to be symbolized as a Masonic attribute in all later rituals.
 - ⁵ An allusion to the Temple of Solomon is common in all the old Constitutions.
- ⁶ Bro. Mackey thought it probable that this was an answer given on the three steps made while the words were being said. We have introduced the word "Response" here and after question and answer No. 39 because they seem to us rejoinders by the questioner himself.



- 37. Q. Give me the Jerusalem Word.1
 - A. Giblin.
- 38. Q. Give me the Universal Word.
 - A. Boaz.
- 39. Q. Right Brother of ours, your Name?
 - A. N. or M.
 - Response Welcome Brother M. or N. to our Society.
- 40. Q. How many particular Points pertain to a Free-Mason?
 - A. Three; Fraternity, Fidelity, and Tacity.
- 41. Q. What do they represent?
 - A. Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth among all Right Masons; for all Masons were ordain'd at the Building of the Tower of Babel and at the Temple of Jerusalem.²
- 42. Q. How many proper Points?
 - A. Five: Foot to Foot, Knee to Knee, Hand to Hand, Heart to Heart, and Ear to Ear.³
- 43. Q. Whence is an Arch derived?
 - A. From Architecture.4
- 44. Q. How many Orders in Architecture?
 - A. Five: The Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite.
- ¹ The "Jerusalem Word" was probably the word traditionally confined to the Craft while working at the Temple, and the "Universal Word" was used when they traveled into foreign countries. The old "Legend of the Craft" has a tradition to that effect which was finally developed into the Temple Allegory of the modern rituals.
- ² Krause gives the following interpretation "Perhaps the Tower of Babel signifies the revolution under and after Cromwell, and the Temple of Jerusalem the restoration of the Stuart family in London." However, we must not forget that the stories of the Tower and the Temple formed prominent points in the Craft legend formulated some two centuries at least before the time of Cromwell or of the restored Stuarts.
- ² At first glance this answer would seem to oppose the theory that the Third was not known in 1717, unless we suppose that the passage was an interpolation made later than 1720. But the fact is that, as Krause remarks, these expressions were not originally a symbol of the Master's degree (Meisterzeichen), but simply a symbol of Fellowship, where heart to heart and hand to hand showed the loving-kindness of each brother. Afterward, under the title of "The Five Points of Fellowship," it was assigned to a degree.
- ⁴ Here, say Schneider and Krause, is a trace of Royal Arch Masonry. Perhaps so, but architecture was the profession of the Operative Freemasons and became naturally a point in the examination of a Craftsman. To carry the assumption any further than that point is not altogether justified by the face value of the facts at hand.



- 45. Q. What do they answer?
 - A. They answer to the Base, Perpendicular, Diameter, Circumference, and Square.
- 46. Q. What is the right Word, or right Point of a Mason?
 A. Adieu.

End of the Catechism.

Various opinions have been expressed of this document. Oliver calls it a "Catchpenny." The Rev. Mr. Sidebotham, who reprinted it in the *Freemasons' Monthly Magazine*, for August, 1855, from a copy found among the collection of Masonic curiosities deposited in the Bodleian Library, calls it "only one of the many absurd attempts of ignorant pretenders."

The learned Mossdorf who, in 1808, found a copy of the second edition ¹ in the Royal Library at Leipsic, which Dr. Krause reprinted in his *Three Oldest Documents of the Masonic Fraternity*, terms it a delicately framed but very bitter satire against the old Lodges in London, which had just established the Grand Lodge. But a study of the document will disclose nothing of a satirical character in the document itself, and only a single paragraph of the preface in which the design of the institution is underrated, and the depreciation illustrated by a rather coarse attempt at a witticism.

But the preface seems due to the editor or printer, and must not be confounded with the catechism, which is free from anything of the kind. The title, which might be deemed ironical, appears an assumed one given to the original document by the same editor or printer for the purpose of attracting purchasers.

Bro. Steinbrenner, who has written a most valuable and interesting book on Freemasonry, thus describes it,² and has given it what probably was the original title:

"The oldest fragment of a ritual or Masonic lecture in the English Language³ which we have met with is the 'Examination upon Entrance into a Lodge,' as used at the time of the Revival."



¹ It was the 2d edition, 1725, with which Mossdorf was acquainted, and to this were annexed "Two Letters to a Friend," which are not contained in the 1st edition. These letters suggested his opinion of the satirical character of the work.

² "The Origin and Early History of Masonry," by G. W. Steinbrenner, Past Master, New York, 1864.

³ When Steinbrenner wrote this the Sloane manuscript, No. 3329, had not been discovered. Now the question is whether it and the original manuscript of "The Grand Mystery" are not about the same date.

Dr. Krause is the first writer who seems to have estimated this old catechism at anything like its true value. He calls it a remarkable document, and says that after a careful examination he has come to the conclusion that it was written by one of the old Operative Freemasons, who was not without some scholarship, but who esteemed Freemasonry as an art appropriate to builders only, and into which a few non-professionals or laymen were sometimes admitted on account of their scientific attainments.

He thinks that this catechism presents traces of a high antiquity, and so far as its essential parts are concerned, it might have its origin from the oldest York ritual, probably as early as the 12th or 13th century.

We need not accept all the Krausean theory on the origin or antiquity of this document. For the purpose of using it in the study of the primitive ritual adopted by the Speculative Freemasons when they organized their Grand Lodge, it is unnecessary to trace its existence beyond the first decade of the 18th century, though that might be reasonably extended much farther back.

The statement in the introduction, that the original manuscript was printed, and had "been found in the custody of a Free-mason who died suddenly," may be accepted as truth. There is nothing improbable about it.

Connect this with the date of the publication, just seven years after the establishment of the Grand Lodge, and only four years after what has been supposed to be the date of the fabrication of the three degrees; and compare it with the Sloane manuscript, No. 3329, where we find many instances of parallel or similar passages; and note that the Sloane manuscript was undeniably an Operative ritual, since its acknowledged date is somewhere between the middle and the close of the 17th century. Considering all these points, we may safely conclude that the original manuscript of the printed document called *The Grand Mystery* was the "Examination upon Entrance into a Lodge" of Operative Freemasons.

The following inferences may then be drawn with fairness in respect to the character of this document:

1. That it was the most essential part of the ritual used by the Operative Freemasons about the close of the 17th and the



beginning of the 18th century, and if anything was wanting in a complete ritual it was furnished by the Sloane manuscript, No. 3329.

- 2. That it was the ritual familiar to the four Lodges which in 1717 united in founding the Speculative Grand Lodge of England.
- 3. That on the establishment of that Grand Lodge it was accepted as the ritual of the Speculative Freemasons and used by them until they perfected the change from wholly Operative to wholly Speculative Freemasonry by the making of degrees and the development of a more philosophical ritual, arranged, as is usually supposed, by Desaguliers and Anderson, principally the former.

Having premised these views, we may now proceed to examine, with some prospect of a satisfactory result, the character and condition of Speculative Freemasonry so far as respects a ritual during the earliest years of the Grand Lodge.

In the first place, it may be remarked that internal evidence goes to prove that this catechism is fitting only for Operative Freemasons. Undoubtedly it was prepared at a time when Speculative Freemasonry, in the modern sense, was not in existence, and when the Lodges which were to use it were composed of Operatives, the Theoretic members not being at all taken into consideration.

This fact is clearly shown by various passages in the catechism. Thus, Question 2 alludes to the hours of labor; Question 3 is whether the brother being examined is in want of work, because the old Constitutions directed the Craft "to receive or cherish strange Fellows when they came over the country and set them to work." Hence, in view of this hospitable duty, the visitor is asked if he is busy, that is to say, if he has work to occupy and support him.

Questions 18 and 19 make reference to the time and duty of setting the men to work, and of dismissing them from labor.

Questions 14 and 21 refer to the square and rule as implements of Operative Freemasonry employed in the Lodge. Question 27 speaks of the ashlar, and 43 and 44 of the Orders of Architecture. All of these are subjects appropriate and familiar to Operative Freemasons, and indicate the character of the catechism.

The next point that calls for attention is that in this Operative ritual there is not the slightest reference to degrees. They



are not mentioned nor alluded to as if any such system existed. The examination is that of a Freemason, but there is no indication whatever to show that he was a Master, Fellow, or an Apprentice. He could not probably have been the last, because, as a general rule, Apprentices were not allowed to travel. The German Steinmetzen, however, sometimes made an exception to this regulation, and the Master who had no work for his Apprentice would furnish him with a "mark" and send him forth in search of employment.

If a similar custom prevailed among the English Freemasons, of which there is no proof for or against, the wandering Apprentice would on visiting a strange Lodge doubtless make use of this catechism. There is nothing in its text to prevent him from doing so, for as has been said there is no mention in it of degrees.

There does not seem to be any doubt in the minds of most Masonic students, with perhaps a very few exceptions, that in the Operative ritual there were no degrees, the words Apprentice, Fellow, and Master referring only to gradations of rank. Probably the ceremonies of admission were exceedingly simple, and that members of all these ranks were permitted to be present at an initiation.

According to this catechism a Lodge consisted of five or seven Freemasons, but it does not say that they must all be Master Masons. The Sloane manuscript says that there should be in a Lodge two Apprentices, two Fellow-Crafts, and two Master Masons.

The Statutes of the Scottish Freemasons explicitly require the presence of two Apprentices at the reception of a Master.

The Old Constitutions, while they have charges specially for Masters and Fellows, between whom they make no distinction, have other "charges in general" which, of course, must include Apprentices, and in these they are commanded to keep secret "the consells of the Lodge," from which it is to be inferred that Apprentices formed a constituent part of that body.

It has been usual to say that from 1717 to 1725 there were only Apprentice Lodges. That is not correct. They were Lodges of Freemasons, and so continued until the making of a system of degrees. After that period they might properly be called Apprentice Lodges, because the first degree only could be conferred there, though Fellow-Crafts and Master Masons were among their members, these until 1725 being made in the Grand Lodge.



The fact that this ritual, purposely designed for Operative Freemasons only, and used in the Operative Lodges of London at the beginning of the 18th century, was adopted in 1717 when the four Lodges united in the organization of a Grand Lodge, suggests there was no expressed intention at that time to give up the Operative character of the institution, and to assume for it a purely Speculative condition.

We use the word "expressed" advisedly, because we do not say that no such intention floated in the minds of cultivated Theoretic Freemasons uniting with their Operative brethren in the organization.

But these Theoretic brethren were men of sense. They knew the worth of the Latin motto, festina lente (to make haste, go slow). They were, it is true, anxious to hasten the formation of an intellectual society, based historically on an association of architects, but ethically on an exalted system of moral philosophy; they saw the error of rudely snapping the ties connecting them with the old Operative Freemasons. Hence, they fairly shared with these the offices of the Grand Lodge until 1723, after which no Operative held a leading position in that body. The first laws they adopted, and which were announced in the "Charges of a Free Mason," compiled by Payne and Anderson about 1719, had all the features of an Operative Code, and the ritual of the Operative Freemasons embodied in The Grand Mystery was accepted by members of the Speculative Grand Lodge until the growth of degrees made it necessary to plan a more philosophical ritual.

We need not conclude that when the system of degrees developed, say in 1720 and 1721, and perhaps due to Dr. Desaguliers, the old Operative ritual was at once cast aside. Probably it continued to be used in the Lodges, where the Fellow-Crafts' and Masters' degrees or ranks 1 were unknown, until 1725, any conferring of them being limited to the Grand Lodge until that year. There were even Operative Lodges in England long after that date, and the old ritual would continue with them a favorite. This will account for the publication in 1724, with so profitable a sale as to encourage the printing of a second edition with appendices in 1725.



¹ Perhaps the word "degrees" should not be used. There is much doubt when the division of the ceremonies into separate degrees took place. See vols. x-xi, "Ars" Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, London.

But the newer ritual became common in 1730 or before and the able defense of it by Anderson in the 1738 edition of the Book of Constitutions shows that the old had been displaced, though some of its tests were long in use among the Craft.

The early Operative ritual, like the Operative laws and customs, made an impression on the Speculative Society which has never been and never will be erased while Freemasonry lasts.

The next feature in this Operative ritual which attracts our attention is its well-defined Christian character. This is shown in Question 29, where the three Lights of the Lodge are said to represent "The Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

Originating as it did, and for a long time working under ecclesiastical control, being closely connected with the Church, and engaged exclusively in the construction of religious edifices, it must naturally have become sectarian, of some church party.

During the earliest times, when the Roman Catholic religion was the prevailing faith of Christendom, Operative Freemasonry was not only Christian but Roman Catholic in its tendencies. Hence, the oldest of the manuscript Constitutions contains a prayer to the Virgin Mary and to the Saints. In Germany the patrons of the Freemasons were the Four Crowned Martyrs.

But when in England the Protestant religion displaced the Roman Catholic, then the Operative Freemasons, following the sectarian tendencies of their countrymen, abandoned the reference to the Virgin and to the Saints, whose worship had been given up by the reformed religion, and invoked only the three Persons of the Trinity. The Harleian manuscript commences thus:

"Thou Almighty Father of Heaven with the Wisdom of the Glorious Sonne, through the goodness of the Holy Ghost, three persons in one Godhead, bee with our beginning & give us grace soe to governe our Lives that we may come to his blisse that never shall have end."

All the other manuscript Constitutions conform to this formula, and hence we find the same feature presented in this catechism, and that in the ritual used when the Grand Lodge was established the three Lights represented the three Persons of the Trinity.

Operative Freemasonry upheld a creed and dogma, from the



beginning churchly, Christian, and sectarian. Of all the differences between Operative and Speculative Freemasonry, this is the most prominent.

The Theoretic Freemasons, those who were not actual workmen, when they united with their Operative fellow-members in the organization of a Grand Lodge, did not reject this sectarian character any more than they did the ritual and the laws of the old association.

But the non-Operative part of the new Society comprised men of education and of liberal views. They were anxious that in their meetings a spirit of toleration should prevail and that no angry discussion should disturb the hours devoted to innocent recreation. Moreover, they knew that the attempt to revive the decaying popularity of Freemasonry and to extend its usefulness would not be successful unless the doors were thrown wide open to admit moral and intellectual men of all shades of political and religious thought. Hence, they strove to exclude the bitterness of partisan politics or of sectarian religion.

Dr. Anderson shows the effect of this liberality of sentiment when he says of this early period of Masonic history:

"Ingenious men of all faculties and stations, being convinced that the cement of the lodge was love and friendship, earnestly requested to be made Masons, affecting this amicable fraternity more than other societies then often disturbed by warm disputes." 1

Thus it was that the first change effected in the character of the institution by which the ultimate separation of Speculative from Operative Freemasons was foreshadowed, was the change in the sectarian feature which had always existed in the latter.

Therefore, in 1721, the Grand Lodge, "finding fault" with the "Old Gothic Constitutions" or the laws of the Operative Freemasons, principally, as the result shows, on account of their sectarian character, instructed Dr. Anderson "to digest them in a new and better method."

This task was duly accomplished, and the "Charges of a Free-mason," published in the first edition of the *Book of Constitutions*, announce for the first time that tolerant feature in the religious attitude of the Order which it has ever since retained.

1 "Book of Constitutions," 2d edition, p. 114.



"Though in ancient times," so runs the first of these "Charges," "Masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation, whatever it was; yet it is now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves."

Because of this declaration of tolerance, the ritual which was framed after the old Operative one, as in *The Grand Mystery*, did not so much favor symbolism from purely Christian dogmas, though Christian sentiments have naturally had an influence upon Speculative Freemasonry.

The institution, in all the countries where it has since extended, has always, with a very few exceptions, been true to the declaration made in 1721 by its founders, and has erected altars, around which men of every faith, if they have only a trust in God as the Grand Architect of the universe, may worship.

But before this sentiment of perfect toleration could be fully developed, it was necessary that the tenets, the practices, and the influence of the Operative element should be wholly removed from the new society. The progress toward this separation of the two systems, the old and the new, would have to be slow and gradual.

Justly has Bro. Gould remarked that "Speculative Masonry was, so to speak, only on its trial during the generation which succeeded the authors of the Revival. The institution of a society of Free and Accepted Masons on a cosmopolitan and unsectarian basis was one thing; its consolidation, however, opposed as its practical working showed it to be to the ancient customs and privileges of the Operatives, was another and a very different affair." ¹

Therefore, as a matter of sheer policy, and also because it is probable that no intention of effecting such a change had, in the beginning, entered into the minds of the future founders of Speculative Freemasonry, it was deemed necessary to continue the use of the simple ritual which had so long been familiar to the Operatives. Accordingly it so continued to be used until, in a few years, the time arrived for the making of a more complex one, and one better adapted to the objects of a Speculative society.

1 "The Four Old Lodges," p. 33.



As it appears, then, to be clearly evident that the Operative ritual was practiced by the Grand Lodge from 1717 until 1721 or 1722, and for a much longer period by many of the Lodges under its jurisdiction, it is proper that we should endeavor, so far as our materials will permit, to describe the character of that ritual.

Masonic scholars who have carefully investigated this subject do not now express any doubt that the rite practiced by the mediæval Freemasons of every country, and which, under some modifications, was used by the Operative Freemasons when the Grand Lodge of England was established, was a very simple one.

In fact, as the word "degree" literally means a step in progression, and would import the possible existence of a higher step to which it is related, it would seem proper to say that the Operative rite consisted of a form of admission with accompanying esoteric instructions, all of the simplest nature.

Master, Fellow, and Apprentice were terms intended to name various ranks of the Craftsmen, which ranks were perhaps wholly unconnected with any grades of ritualistic knowledge.

Masters were those who superintended the labors of the Craft, or were, perhaps, in many instances the employers of the workmen engaged on an edifice. Paley suggests that they were probably architects, and that they must have been trained in one and the same school (just as our clergy are trained), and either sent about to different stations or attached to some church or cathedral, or took up their permanent residence in certain localities.¹

This description is suitable to the most flourishing period of Gothic architecture, when such Craftsmen as William of Sens or Erwin of Steinbach were the Masters who directed the construction of those noble works of architecture which were to win the admiration of succeeding ages.

But in the 17th and the early 18th century, when there was a decay in the old science of Gothic architecture, every Fellow appointed by an employer or by his brethren to govern a Lodge and to direct the works became thereby a Master Mason.

We know that this usage was for some time observed by the Speculative Freemasons. In the form of constituting a new Lodge as prescribed in 1723 by the Duke of Wharton, it says

1 "Manual of Gothic Architecture," p. 209.



the Master to be installed, "being yet among the Fellow-Craft," must be taken from them and be inducted into office by the Grand Master; by which act he became a Master Mason, and not by receiving a degree; and the investiture of certain additional secrets.¹

The Fellows were workmen who had served an apprenticeship of several years, and had at length acquired a knowledge of the trade. They constituted the great body of the Craft, as is evident from the constant references to them in the Old Constitutions.

The Apprentices, as is the foundation meaning of the word, were learners. They were youths pledged to serve their Masters for a term of five or seven years, on the condition that the Master shall instruct them in the trade, that at the end of their term of service they might be admitted to the rank or class of Fellows.

If there was but one ceremony of admission common to all classes of the Craft, it follows that there could be no secrets of a ritual character belonging exclusively to either of the three classes, whatever was known to Masters and Fellows must also have been given to Apprentices; and this is very evident from the well-known fact that the presence of members of each class was necessary to the legal communications of a Lodge.

The Mason Word is the only secret mentioned in the minutes of the Scotch Lodges. But German and English rituals give other words and methods of recognition besides an examination including the esoteric instructions of Operative Freemasonry.

The most important of these points is that at the organization of the Grand Lodge in 1717 and for a brief period afterwards there was but a simple ceremony known to the Operatives, and that for three or four years this simple system was accepted and practiced in Speculative Freemasonry.

The inquiry, so far as it has advanced, has probably satisfied us that the Operative ritual was that which was at first adopted by the founders of Speculative Freemasonry. When in the course of time they discarded this ritual as too simple and as unsuitable to their designs, they were obliged, in the construction of their new system, to develop and fit their materials afresh.

We must not omit to note here the claims for a more elaborate series of ceremonies among the Operative Freemasons. Bro. Clement E. Stretton in his *Tectonic Art*, published at Melton Mow-

¹ See the form in the 1st edition of Anderson, p. 71.



bray, England, 1909, tells us of Square Masons and Arch Masons, the former distinguished by the color "blue" and having seven degrees, and the latter having the color "red" and also having seven degrees. Some explanation of this degree system is given by Bro. Thomas Carr in the Ritual of the Operative Free Masons, Tyler Publishing Co., Owosso, Mich., and more extensively in a later work by Bro. Charles H. Merz, Guild Masonry in the Making, 1918, Light Publishing Co., Louisville, Ky.

Bro. Stretton says: "In 1710 the Rev. James Anderson was the Chaplain of the St. Paul's Gild Masons, who at that time had their headquarters at the Goose and Gridiron Ale House in St. Paul's Churchyard, and in September, 1717, the books of the Gild shew that Anderson had made a very remarkable innovation in the rules, which was to admit persons as members of the Masonic Gild, without their serving the seven years apprenticeship. This caused a split in the ranks."

On the other side of the argument Bro. Edward Conder, Jr., Master in 1895 of the Masons Company of the City of London, says, *Proceedings* (Ars), Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, in 1896: "There is no evidence of any particular ceremony attending the position of Master Mason," and his conclusions are confirmed by Bro. W. H. Rylands who as Master of the Company later on examined the records of this famous Gild body.

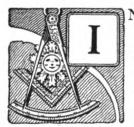
Bro. W. J. Hughan, 1909, in his revised Origin of the English Rite of Freemasonry, Bro. John T. Thorp, editor, published by the Lodge of Research, Leicester, England, has this to say on the subject, page 32: "Not a single manuscript has yet been made public, which proves that seven degrees were thus made known to Dr. Anderson, or to any other brother in 1714; but as a matter of fact, all Masonic Records before 1717, so far traced and published, are entirely silent as to Red and Blue Masons (so called), and likewise as to Dr. Anderson's connection with the Freemasons prior to the third decade of the 18th century. The year 1714 is much too late for the introduction of the Speculative element in the Craft; quite a profusion of minutes of such admissions having been traced from the year 1600. All we can do, therefore, is to patiently wait for the production of documents in confirmation of the claims thus made, and so intelligently and persistently advocated."



The task, therefore, to which our attention must now be directed, is first to show something of the degree system of the primitive ritual accepted in 1717 by the Speculatives; and, secondly, to point out the mode and the period when a larger ritual was invented.

CHAPTER SEVENTY-SEVEN

DEGREE SYSTEM OF OPERATIVE FREEMASONS



N the Articles of Union agreed to in 1813 by the two Grand Lodges of England, the "Moderns" and the "Ancients" as they were called, it was declared that "pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more." If by Ancient Masonry it was intended to refer to the system then existing, and to no other and ear-

lier one—if the character of Masonic antiquity was to be limited within the one hundred preceding years, or thereabouts—then the declaration of the Articles of Union might be accepted as historical truth.

But if it was designed to refer by these words to the whole period of time within which was included the era of the Operative, and of the combined Operative and Speculative Freemasonry, as well as that later one when pure Speculative Freemasonry alone prevailed, then the assertion must be considered as most doubtful and in the light of present knowledge as having no foundation in authentic history.

Let us suppose our judgment on this subject to be formed merely on the complete silence of the Old Records. In that case we should be forced to the conclusion that until the close of the second decade of the 18th century, or about the year 1720, when the Speculative element was slowly separating itself from the Operative, there was only one ceremony of initiation or degree known as the word is understood at the present day.

We have evidence that the Operative Freemasons of Scotland in the 15th century adopted, to some extent, the secret ceremonies observed by the mediæval builders elsewhere in Europe.¹ We

¹ See Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 234. This is evident from the charter granted to the Masons and Wrights of Edinburgh in 1475, copied by Lyon (p. 230) from the Burgh Records of Edinburgh, where reference is made for their government according to the customs "in the towne of Bruges."

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may therefore refer to the records of the Scotch Lodges for a correct knowledge of what was the degree system practiced, not only in Scotland but on the continent, at that period.

Now we have abundant evidence by a fair inference from the records of the old Scottish Lodges that there was in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries only a simple ceremony or degree known to the brotherhood.

There were, it is true, three classes, grades or ranks of Free-masons, namely, Masters, men who made contracts and undertook the work of building for employers of means; Fellow-Crafts or Journeymen employed by these Masters; and Entered Apprentices, who were received into the Fraternity that they might be taught the art of building. But this difference of rank or standing involved no variation of esoteric instruction. There was one ceremony and one set of secrets for all, and common to and known by everyone, from the youngest Apprentice to the oldest Master. This is plainly to be understood from all the Old Records.

Thus, in the Schaw Statutes, whose date is December 28, 1498, it is enacted as follows:

"Item that na maister or fellow of craft be ressavit nor admittit without the number of sex maisters and twa enterit prenteissis the wardene of that lodge being one of the said sex."

The same regulation, generally, in very nearly the same words, is to be found in the later records, constitutions, and minutes of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Now what meaning must be drawn from the oft-repeated language of this statute? Certainly only this, that if two Apprentices were required to be present at the reception of a Fellow-Craft or a Master, there could have been no secrets to be communicated to the candidates as Fellow-Crafts or Masters which were not already known to the Apprentices. In other words, that these three ranks were not separated and distinguished from each other by any ceremonies or instructions which would constitute degrees in the modern acceptation of the term. In fact, there could have been but one degree common to all.

Upon this subject Bro. Lyon says: "It is upon Schaw's regulation anent the reception of Fellows or Masters, that we found our opinion that in primitive times there were no secrets communicated by Lodges to either Fellows of Craft or Masters



that were not known to Apprentices, seeing that members of the latter grade were necessary to the legal constitution of communications for the admission of Masters or Fellows." 1

In fact, we are confirmed in this conclusion by what is clearly said in the same Old Records of the "Mason Word."

The "Mason Word" and what was connected with it appeared to constitute the only secret known to the Freemasons of the centuries preceding the 18th. This was, however, not simply a word. There were other mysteries connected with it, as is apparent from an expression in the minutes of the Lodge of Dunblane. Here it is said that two Apprentices of the Lodge of Kilwinning, being examined on their application for affiliation, were found to have "a competent knowledge of the secrets of the Mason Word." ²

Probably these secrets included a sign and grip. Indeed, the records of Haughfort Lodge in 1707 state the fact that there was a grip, and it is known that as early as the 12th century the German Freemasons used all these modes of recognition.³

There was also a Legend or Allegory, but perhaps nothing, however, like the modern legend of the Third Degree, which connected the Craft traditionally with the Tower of Babel and the Temple of Solomon. This Legend was contained in what we now call the Legend of the Craft or the Legend of the Gild. This is contained, with only slight variations, in all the old manuscript Constitutions. That this Legend was always deemed a part of the secrets of the brotherhood is very evident from the destruction of many of those manuscripts by scrupulous Freemasons in 1720, from the fear, as Anderson expresses it, that they might fall into the wrong hands.

Whatever were the secrets connected with the "Mason Word," there is abundant evidence that they were communicated freely and completely to the Apprentice on his initiation.

We have the evidence of the Schaw Statutes that two Apprentices were required to be present at the reception of a Mason



¹ "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 23.

² "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 417.

³ The English Freemasons in the beginning of the 18th century, and we may not unfairly suppose such was the case before that period, had two words, the "Jerusalem Word" and the "Universal Word." See the Examination in the preceding chapter. The German Freemasons also had two words, at least.

or a Fellow-Craft. Then the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh for 1601, 1606, and 1637, referred to by Bro. Lyon, show that Apprentices were present during the making of Fellow-Crafts. Again, we find the following conclusive testimony in the Laws and Statutes of the Lodge of Aberdeen, adopted December 27, 1760:

"Wee Master Masons and Entered Prentises, all of us underseryvers, doe here protest and vowe as hitherto wee have done at our entrie when we received the benefit of the Mason Word," &c.²

From all of which we feel authorized to entertain the opinion, in the language of Bro. Lyon, who has thoroughly investigated the subject, so far at least as relates to Scotland, "that 'the Word' and other secrets peculiar to Masons were communicated to Apprentices on their admission to the lodge, and that the ceremony of passing was simply a testing of the candidate's fitness for employment as a journeyman." ³

The English Lodges of the same period, that is, up to the beginning of the 18th century, exhibit no indications of the existence of more than a single ceremony common to the whole Craft. The Apprentices, however, do not occupy in the old English Constitutions so conspicuous a place as they do in the Scotch. We can, for instance, find no regulation like that in the Schaw Statutes which requires Apprentices to be present at the making of Fellow-Crafts.

These facts are further complicated by the circumstance that the degree ceremonies in old Lodges were frequently performed in a small separate apartment called the "Making Room."⁴

But in the oldest of the English Constitutions which have been unearthed by the labors of Masonic delvers among the remains—namely, the one known as the Regius manuscript, the date of which is supposed to be not later than the close of the 14th century—we find indications of the fact that the Apprentices were in possession of all the secret knowledge possessed by the Masters and Fellows, and that they were allowed to be present at meet-

- ¹ "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 74.
- ² "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 423.
- ² "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 233.
- ⁴ "Ancient Freemasonry and the Old Dundee Lodge, No. 18, 1722-1920," Arthur Heiron, London, pp. 96, 135.



ings of the Lodge. Thus, the thirteenth article of that early Constitution says:

"—gef that the mayster a prentes have Enterlyche thenne that he hym teche, And meserable poyntes that he hym reche, That he the crafte abelyche may conne, Whersever he go undur the sonne." 1

That is, if a Master have an Apprentice, he shall give him thorough instruction, and place him in the possession of such points of importance as will enable him to recognize the members of the Craft wheresoever he may go. He was to be invested with the modes of recognition common to all, whereby a mutual intercourse might be held. It was not that he was to know just enough to prove himself to be an Apprentice. He was to have such knowledge as would enable him to recognize in a stranger a Fellow-Craft or a Master—in other words, he was to have all they had, in the way of recognition.

There is to be found a more important admission. The Apprentice was permitted to be present at the meetings of a Lodge of Masters and Fellows. He could take part in or at least be a witness of their private transactions. So much at least is clearly seen in the third point of this Constitution, which is in the following words:

"The thrydee poynt must be severele,
With the prentes knowe hyt wele.
Hys mayster cownsel he kepe and close,
And hys fellowes by hys goode purpose;
The prevystye of the chamber telle he no mon,
Ny yn the logge whatsever they done;
Whatsever thon heryst or eyste hem do
Telle hyt no mon, whersever thou go;

¹ "Regius" or "Halliwell" manuscript, lines 240-244. Bro. Roderick H. Baxter, in a paper read before the Lodge of Research at Leicester, England, see "Transactions," 1914-15, p. 63, modernizes the words thus:

"If that the master a 'prentice have, Entirely then that he him teach, And measurable points that he him tell, That he the craft ably may know, Wheresover he go under the sun."



The cownsel of halle and yeke of boure, Kepe hyt wel to gret honoure, Lest hyt wolde torne thyself to blame, And brynge the craft ynto gret schame." 1

Thus, the Apprentice was directed to keep the counsel of his Master and Fellows. He was to tell to no one the secrets of the chamber nor what he should see or hear done in the Lodge.² He was to keep the counsel of "hall and bower," a mediæval phrase denoting all sorts of secrets. All this he was to observe lest he should bring the Craft into shame.

Probably we need nothing more explicit to prove that Apprentices were admitted to share the secrets of the Fellows and be present at the meetings of the Lodge. All of this in our opinion is evidence against the existence of separate degrees.

The same reference to Apprentices as being in possession of the secrets of the Craft, which they were not to tell unlawfully, is found in later Constitutions. In the York Constitutions, first published by Bro. Hughan in his *History of Freemasonry in York*, under the title of "The Apprentice Charge," it is said that "he shall keepe councell in all things spoken in Lodg or Chamber by any Masons, Fellowes or Fremasons."

The Masonic student, while carefully reading the Old Records of the English Freemasons and comparing them with those of the Scotch, will be struck with one important difference between them. In the Scotch Statutes, Constitutions, and Minutes, the Apprentices are spoken of as assisting the brotherhood.

¹ "Regius" manuscript, lines 275–286. Bro. R. H. Baxter, in his Lodge of Research paper already quoted in this chapter, puts these lines into modern words thus:

"The third point must be severely,
With the 'prentice know it well,
His master's counsel he keep and close,
And his fellows by his good purpose;
The privities of the chamber tell he no man,
Nor in the lodge whatsoever they do;
Whatsoever thou hearest or seest them do,
Tell it no man wheresoever you go;
The counsel of hall, and even of bower,
Keep it well to great honor,
Lest it would turn thyself to blame,
And bring the craft into great shame."

² Similar to this is "The Apprentice Charge" contained in the Lodge of Hope manuscript, the date of which is about 1675–1700. It says that the Apprentice "shall keep counsell in all things spoken in lodge or chamber by fellowes or free masons."



Thus, the Schaw Statutes fix the fee for the admission of Fellow-Crafts. This rule is followed by another prescribing the fee for the admission of Apprentices. Twice in the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh (1706 and 1709) it is recorded that a notary who was appointed for the purpose of acting as "clerk to the brethren masons" was initiated as "ane entered Apprentice and Fellow-Craft." Lastly, Apprentices were required to be present at the admission of Fellow-Crafts and Masters.

We think, therefore, that eminent Masonic historians have been justified in the conclusion to which they have arrived after a careful examination of old documents, that until a short time after the organization of the Grand Lodge in the year 1717, there is not to be found unmistakable evidence of the existence of more than one degree; that substantially all the secrets were communicated to the Apprentices, and that the earliest ceremony of passing to a Fellow-Craft was in all likelihood simply a testing of the candidate's fitness for employment as a journeyman.²

Bro. Hughan says that "no record prior to the second decade of the last century ever mentions Masonic degrees, and all the manuscripts preserved decidedly confirm us in the belief that in the mere Operative (although partly Speculative) career of Freemasonry the ceremony of reception was of a most unpretentious and simple character, mainly for the communication of certain lyrics and secrets, and for the conservation of ancient customs of the Craft." ³

In another place the same distinguished writer says: "I have carefully perused all the known Masonic manuscripts from the 14th century down to A.D. 1717 (of which I have either seen the originals or have certified copies), and have not been able to find any reference to three degrees." 4

Bro. Findel says: "Originally it seems there was but one degree of initiation in the year 1717; the degrees or grades of Apprentice, Fellow, and Master were introduced about the year 1720." ⁵

¹ Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 43.

² Such is the opinion of Bro. Lyon. See "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 233.

² Voice of Masonry, vol. xii, June, 1874, p. 340.

⁴ Cited by Lyon in "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 211.

⁵ "History of Freemasonry," p. 150, Lyon's Translation.

Bro. Lyon, also, who has thoroughly investigated the customs of the early Scottish Lodges, in referring to the Schaw Statute, which required two Apprentices to be present at the admission of Fellows, says that in 1693 "the Lodge recognized 'passing,' i.e., a promotion to the fellowship, simply as an 'honour and dignity.'" He also says:

"If the communication by Mason Lodges of secret words or signs constituted a degree—a term of modern application to the esoteric observances of the Masonic body—then there was under the purely Operative régime (control) only one known to Scotch Lodges, viz., that in which, under an oath, Apprentices obtained a knowledge of the Mason Word and all that was implied in the expression." 1

Moreover, Dr. Oliver, who, of all writers, is the least a doubter in respect to Masonic traditions, acknowledges that there is no evidence of the existence of degrees in Freemasonry before the beginning of the 18th century.

Among the Masonic scholars of eminence who deny or doubt this claim is the Rev. Bro. A. F. A. Woodford. Bro. Mackey, who had a high estimate of Bro. Woodford, says he asserted his opinion rather negatively, as if he were unwilling to doubt, than positively as if he were ready to deny the fact, that the old Operative system consisted of but one degree.

We all agree that Bro. Woodford was a competent critic whose learning and experience entitled his opinion on any point of Masonic history to a respectful consideration, therefore it will be proper to examine the weight of his arguments on this subject.

In the year 1874 Bro. W. J. Hughan proposed, in the *London Freemason*, to defend in future communications three historical statements against anyone who should question or oppose them.

One of these very thoughtful statements of Bro. Hughan's was made in the following direct and definite terms:

"The references to Masonic degrees (as we understand the term now) never occur in the ancient minutes; no rituals of degrees prior to 1720 are in existence, and whatever esoteric customs may have been communicated to Craftsmen before the last century, they do not appear to have necessitated the temporary absence of either class of members from the Lodge." ²



¹ Lyon, "History of the Lodge of Edinburgh," p. 23.

² London Freemason, June 27, 1874.

To this challenge Bro. Woodford responded in a later number of the same paper.¹

The gist of our learned Brother's argument in reply appears to be that though, as Hughan asserts, there may be no ritual evidence of the existence of the three degrees before 1720, yet "such a proposition need not be understood as asserting that they did not exist, but only that, so far, we have no ritual evidence of their distinct existence as now."

Weighed strictly as a logical conclusion, it appears to us that such a disposition of the question is far from sound. An excellent maxim of the schools, which has been adopted in philosophy, in physical science, and in law, is that "of things which do not appear and of things which do not exist, the reasoning is the same." ²

Certainly we can only arrive at a correct judgment when we are guided by evidence; without it no judgment can be reasonably formed. Dr. Hedge, in his excellent manual of logic, says: "The proof that the Romans once possessed Great Britain is made up of a variety of independent arguments: as immemorial tradition; the testimony of historians; the ruins of Roman buildings, camps, and walls; Roman coins, inscriptions, and the like. These are independent arguments; but they all conspire to establish the fact." *

Let us apply this method of reasoning to the question of the existence of Masonic degrees prior to the year 1720. We see clearly how completely the affirmative proposition is without support. We have no immemorial tradition, no historical testimony, no allusion in old documents, such as the manuscript Constitutions, the minutes of the Scottish or of the very few English Lodges that are extant, nor in the English or German Freemasons, which tend to prove the existence of degrees in the old system of Operative Freemasonry. On the contrary, we have abundant evidence in these Constitutions and minutes that the secrets of the Craft were common to the three classes, and that Apprentices were required to be present at the admission of Masters.

The other argument of Bro. Woodford is along the same line, that, "notwithstanding the Scotch Lodges had an open court

¹ London Freemason, July 27, 1874.

² De non apparentibus et de non existentibus, eadem est ratio.

² "Elements of Logic," by Levi Hedge, LL.D., Boston, 1827, p. 74.

The assumption is possible, but it does not thence follow that it is true. In this investigation we seek not possibilities but facts, and, as Bro. Woodford, usually so careful and so accurate in his historical and archæological inquiries, has supplied no proof of the theory which he has advanced, it must be accepted as a mere guess, and may be fairly met with a contrary one.

However, the remarks of Bro. Hughan himself, in reply to the arguments of Bro. Woodford, are so conclusive and throw so much light upon this interesting subject that I can not refrain from enriching the pages of this work with the very words of this eminent authority in Masonic research.¹

"Now what do the old Lodge minutes say on this subject? We have had authorized excerpts from these valuable books published (with few exceptions). The whole of the volumes have been most diligently and carefully searched, the result made known, and every Masonic student furnished with the testimony of these important witnesses, all of which, from the 16th century to the first half of the second decade of the 18th century, unite in proving that there is no register of any assembly of Masons working ceremonies or communicating 'secrets' from which any portion of the Fraternity was excluded or denied participation; neither can there be found a single reference in these Lodge minutes to justify one in assuming 'three degrees' to be even known to the brethren prior to A.D. 1716-1717.² Of course, there can be no doubt as to what may be termed grades in Ancient Masonry. Apprentices had to serve their 'regular time' before being accounted Fellow-Crafts, and then subsequently the office or position of Master Mason was conferred upon a select few; but no word is ever said about 'degrees.' All the members were evidently eligible to attend at the introduction of Fellow-Crafts and Master Masons, as well as at the admission of Apprentices; and so far as the records throw light on the customs of our early brethren,



¹ Contained in the London Masonic Magazine for August, 1874.

² Perhaps the learned Brother makes here a rather too liberal admission. We have found no conclusive evidence of the existence of three degrees in the year 1717, and it will be hereafter seen that their arrangement is assigned to a later date.

the Apprentices were as welcome at the election and reception of Masters—as the latter were required to participate in the initiation of the former.

"We are quite willing to grant, for the sake of argument, that a word may have been whispered in the ear of the Master of the Lodge (or of Master Masons) on their introduction or constitution in the Lodge; but supposing that such were the case (and we think the position is at least probable), the 'three degrees' are as far from being proved as before, especially as we have never yet traced any intimation, ever so slight, of a special ceremony at the 'passing' of Fellow-Crafts, peculiar to that grade, and from which Apprentices were excluded.

"If we have overlooked such a minute, we shall be only too glad to acknowledge the fact; but at present we must reiterate our conviction, that whatever the ceremonies may have been at the introduction of Fellow-Crafts and Master Masons anterior to the last century, they were not such as to require the exclusion of Apprentices from the Lodge meetings; and in the absence of any positive information on the subject, we are not justified in assuming the existence of 'three degrees of Masonry' at that period; or, in other words, we can only fairly advocate that two have existed of which we have evidence, and whatever else we may fancy was known, should only be advocated on the grounds of probability. If the proof of 'three degrees' before 1717 is to rest on the authority of the Sloane manuscript, No. 3329, we shall be glad to give our opinion on the subject.

"With all respect, then, for our worthy Brother, the Rev. A. F. A. Woodford, whose exertions and contributions to Masonic literature have been continuous and most valuable for many years, we feel bound to state we do not believe according to the evidences accumulated that the 'three degrees were distinct grades in the Operative Order; but that the term Apprentice, Fellow-Craft, and Master Mason simply denoted Masonic, relative, or official positions.'"

Latest conclusions may be briefly set down as follows:

Bro. W. J. Hughan maintains that distinct and separate Masonic degrees are never met with, alluded to, or even probable before some time about 1716-1717.



Bro. R. F. Gould asserts the entire body of evidence from 1723 –1730 is conclusive with respect to two degrees and no more having been worked in the regular Lodges. He held that two degrees only, Entered Apprentice and Fellow-Craft or Master, were recognized by the 1723 Constitutions, and that three degrees, Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master, were acknowledged by those of 1738.

Bro. George W. Speth held that there were two degrees always among the Operative Freemasons and more recently these two degrees were run into one when conferred upon a Speculative candidate. He says further that in 1717 the two degrees were taken over bodily by the Grand Lodge and restored to sense as well as the limited knowledge of the members would permit and, finally, shortly after 1723, they were reapportioned into three degrees.

The subject is discussed in Gould's Concise History of Free-masonry, and in volumes 10 and 11, Proceedings (Ars) Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076.

After all, the opinion of Bro. A. F. A. Woodford as given in his *Cyclopedia of Freemasonry*, page 152, best summarizes the situation as to the past and present degree system. He concludes by saying: "We fancy that it is only a question of arrangement and terminology."

Granting, then, there was originally but a simple ceremony or one degree, the one into which Freemasons of every class or rank were initiated, according to a very simple form, upon their admission to the Craft, it follows that the present accepted formulas or methods of the degrees of Fellow-Craft and Master Mason must be of comparatively recent origin. This is really a logical conclusion that can not be avoided in our opinion. If that be the case, then the next question that we have to meet and discuss is as to the time and the circumstances of the arrangement of these degrees.



CHAPTER SEVENTY-EIGHT

INVENTION OF THE FELLOW-CRAFT DEGREE



T having been satisfactorily shown, first, that during the existence of pure Operative Free-masonry there was but a simple degree, or ritual, of admission, or system of secret working in a lodge, which was accessible in common to all the members of the Craft, Apprentices as well as Fellows and Masters; secondly, that

in the year 1717, when the Speculative element began to assume a hitherto unknown lead, though it did not at once attempt to sever the connection with the Operative, the Grand Lodge then formed, accepted, and practiced for some time this system of a single degree; and thirdly, that in the year 1723 we have the authentic documentary evidence of the "General Regulations" published in that year, that two degrees had been built on this original one, and that at that time Speculative Freemasonry consisted of three degrees; it follows as a natural inference, that in the interval of six years, between 1717 and 1723, the two further degrees must have been invented or arranged from the old material.

We must here remark, among other things, that the word "degree," in reference to the system practiced by the Operative Freemasons, is used only in a conventional sense, and for the mere sake of convenience. To say, as is sometimes carelessly said, that the Operative Freemasons possessed only the Apprentice's degree, is to speak incorrectly. The system practiced by the Operatives may be called a degree, if you choose. But it was not peculiar to Apprentices only, but belonged in common to all the ranks or classes of the Fraternity.

The minimum, the very least, that such a simple ceremony could with profit contain is explained as actual fact by Fergusson in *History of Architecture* thus: "At a time when writing was unknown among the laity, and not one mason in a thousand



could either read or write, it was evidently essential that some expedient should be hit upon, by which a mason traveling to his work might claim the assistance and hospitality of his brother masons on the road and by means of which he might take his rank at once, on reaching the Lodge, without going through tedious examinations or giving practical proof of his skill. For this purpose a set of secret signs was invented, which enabled all masons to recognize one another as such, and by which also each man could make known his grade to those of similar rank, without further trouble than a manual sign, or the utterance of some recognized password."

When the Speculative branch wholly separated from the Operative, and three divisions of the Order, then properly called degrees were arranged, this ritual of the latter doubtless became the basis of them all. Portions of it were probably greatly modified and much developed, and became what is now known as the First degree, though it continued for many years to receive additions by the invention of new symbols and new ceremonies, and by sometimes undergoing important changes. Other portions of it, but to a less extent, were worked into the two supplemental degrees, the Second and the Third.

The late E. L. Hawkins, a scholarly and devoted Freemason, has in a paper for Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, vol. xxvi, on the *Evolution of Masonic Ritual*, treated with great care the earliest of records and his researches are necessary to any complete study.

In brief, the old manuscripts show that certain duties were first explained to the initiate or candidate and that these were followed by oaths for the faithful performance of the requirements. Thus in the *Regius* manuscript of the 14th century:

"He schal swere never to be no thef,
Ny soker hym yn hys fals craft." (Lines 422-423.)

(He shall swear never to be a thief,
Nor to help a thief in his falseness.)

"A good trewe othe he most ther swere
To hys mayster and hys felows that ben there."

(Lines 429-430.)

(A good true oath he must there swear
To his master and the fellows that are present.)



"And alle these poyntes hyr before
To hem thou most nede be y-swore,
And alle schul swere the same ogth
Of the masonus, ben they luf, ben they loght.

(Lines 435-438.)

(And all these points already given
To them thou must needs be sworn,
And all shall swear the same oath
Of the Masons, be they lief or be they loath.)

When at the Assembly, be it annually or every third year when the brethren came together, they were also sworn to keep the Statutes laid down for the Craft by King Athelstan (Lines 471-496). That some form of ritual accompanied these repeated and most solemn pledges is beyond question.

By this growth of the old ritual, and by the invention of a new one, the ancient system, or, conventionally speaking, the original degree work of the Operatives, became the Entered Apprentice's degree of the Speculatives, and two new degrees, one for the Fellow-Crafts and one for the Master Masons, were invented. When and by whom were these two new degrees invented and introduced into the modern system of Speculative Freemasonry?

An answer to this question would probably say that they were the invention of that recognized ritualist, Dr. John Theophilus Desaguliers, with the coöperation of Dr. James Anderson, and perhaps a few others, among whom it would not be fair to omit the name of George Payne. The time of this invention would be placed after the formation of the Grand Lodge in 1717, and before the publication of the first edition of its *Book of Constitutions* in 1723.

Of the time and manner of the making of the Fellow-Craft's degree the writers who have adopted the theory here announced have not paid so much attention as they have to that of the Master Mason. Recognizing the fact that the two supplementary degrees were worked out between the years 1717 and 1723, they have not sought to define the precise date, and seem to have been willing to believe them to have been of the same period.

Bro. Mackey concluded, after as careful an investigation as he was capable of making, that the shaping of the degree of Fellow-Craft preceded that of Master Mason by three or four years, and



In a strict order of events, it may be said that the single degree or ritual in which, and in the secrets of which, all classes of workmen, from the Apprentice to the Master, equally took part, formed under various modifications a ceremony of Operative Freemasonry from the earliest times. The possession of those secrets, simple as they were, distinguished the Freemasons from the Rough Layers in England, from the Cowans in Scotland, and from the Maürer, or Wall Builders, in Germany.

This degree, in its English form, was the only one known or practiced in London in 1717, at the era called the "Revival." The degree of Fellow-Craft, in the modern meaning of the word degree, was put unto the system, probably a very few years after the organization of the Grand Lodge, and was fully recognized as a degree in 1719, or perhaps early in 1720.

Finally, the Third or Master's degree was added, making the series of degrees as they now exist, between the years 1720 and 1723—probably not before the former nor after the latter period. Of this theory we have some documentary evidence of trustworthy character that convinced Bro. Mackey.

Bro. Lyon, *History of the Lodge of Edinburgh*, cites a record bearing on the question of the time when the Second degree originated. It is in the minutes of the Lodge of Dunblane, under date of December 27, 1720, about sixteen years prior to the founding of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The minute records that a lawyer, and therefore a Theoretic Freemason, who had formerly been entered, had, after a due examination, been "duely passed fron the Squair to the Compass and from ane Entered Prentiss to a Fellow of Craft." Commenting on this minute, Bro. Lyon says:

"It would appear from this that what under the modern ritual of the Fraternity is a symbol peculiar to the Second Degree, was under the system which obtained in Scotland prior to the introduction of the Third Degree, the distinctive emblem of the Entered Apprentice step—and what is now a leading symbol in



the degree of Master Mason was then indicative of the Fellow-Craft, or highest grade of Lodge membership." 1

This record supports the theory that the Fellow-Craft's degree was shaped up in London after 1717 and before the close of 1720.

If the first notice of the degree of Fellow-Craft being conferred in Scotland, as a degree, occurs in the record of a Lodge in the last days of the year 1720; and if, as we know from other sources, that Scotland derived the expanded system of degrees from the sister kingdom; then Bro. Mackey held it is reasonable to suppose that the degree must have been given in Scotland at as early a period after its making in England as agreed with a due allowance of time for its transit from the Lodges of the latter kingdom to those of the former, and for the necessary preparation for its legal adoption.

The degree must, of course, have been practiced in London for some time before it would move to other places. Hence we may accept the theory as something more than a mere guess, that the Second degree had been invented by Desaguliers and his co-workers on the ritual of the new Grand Lodge in the course of 1719, or at the beginning of 1720.

From the 24th of June, 1717, when the Grand Lodge was established, and the end of the year 1718, the period of less than eighteen months was too brief for the overthrow of a system, endeared to the Craft by its great age. Time and opportunity were required for the removal of opposition, the conciliation of prejudices, and the preparation of rituals, which would bring us to 1719 as a likely date of the Second degree.

In fact it is highly probable that the degree was not thoroughly formulated and legally introduced into the ritual until after the 24th of June, 1719, when Desaguliers, then Grand Master, with the first Grand Master, Sayer, who was then one of the Grand Wardens, had from their official positions, sufficient influence to cause the acceptance of the new degree by the Grand Lodge.

We can gather very little, except by inference, from the very limited records of Anderson, and yet he shows us that there

¹ No reference is here made to the later change of the Third degree resulting in the Royal Arch degree, as that subject will be hereafter fully discussed.



was certainly an impetus to the Order in 1719, which might well have come from the invention of a new and more attractive ritual.

Anderson says, referring to 1719, that "now several old brothers, that had neglected the Craft, visited the Lodges; some noblemen were also made brothers, and more new Lodges were constituted."

The record of the preceding year tells us that the Grand Master Payne had desired the brethren to bring to the Grand Lodge any old writings concerning Freemasonry "in order to shew the usages of ancient times."

Northouck, a later and reliable authority, expanding his predecessor's language, says that "the wish expressed at the Grand Lodge for collecting old manuscripts, appears to have been preparatory to the compiling and publishing a body of Masonical Constitutions."

We see in this act the suggestion of the idea then beginning to be entertained by the Speculative leaders of the new Society to give it a more elevated character by the adoption of new laws and a new form of ceremonies. To guide them in this novel attempt, they desired to obtain all accessible information as to old practices.

Some of the older Operative Craftsmen, becoming alarmed at what they believed was an effort to make public the secrets so scrupulously hidden from the eyes of the profane by their predecessors, and who were unwilling to aid in any change of the old ritual, an attempt which had been successful in the making of a Second degree, and the modification of the First, resolved to throw obstructions in the way of any further innovations.

This will account for the fact recorded by Anderson that, between June, 1719, and June, 1720, several valuable manuscripts concerning the ancient "regulations, charges, secrets, and usages" were burnt "by some scrupulous brothers, that those papers might not fall into strange hands."

The records do not say so, in as many words, but we may safely infer from their tenor that the conflict had begun between the old Operative Freemasons who desired to see no change from the ancient ways, and the more liberal-minded Theoretic mem-

¹ Dr. Anderson, in his record of the order of events, counts the years from the installation of one Grand Master in June to that of the next in June of the following year.



bers, who were anxious to develop the system and to have a more intellectual ritual. This conflict terminated in 1723 with the triumph of the Theoretics and the defeat of the Operatives. The latter then left the institution of Speculative Freemasonry to assume the form it has since retained, as "a science of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols," a definition unfit for the old Operative system.

In the minute of the Dunblane Lodge which has been cited through Bro. Lyon, it was said that the candidate in being advanced from an Entered Apprentice to a Fellow-Craft had "passed from the Square to the Compass." It is curious and significant that this expression was adopted on the Continent very early in the 18th century, when the hautes grades or high degrees arose. With the inventors of these new degrees the Square was the symbol of Craft Freemasonry, while the Compass was the appropriate emblem of what they called their more elevated instruction. Hence, instead of the Square worn by the Master of an Ancient Craft Lodge, the Master of a Lodge of Perfection substitutes the Compasses as the badge of his office.

But in Ancient Craft Freemasonry, whose history alone we now discuss, the Compass is at this day a symbol peculiar to the Third degree, while it would seem from the above minute that early in the 18th century it was appropriate to the Fellow-Crafts. Commenting on this phrase in the records of the Lodge of Dunblane, Bro. Lyon remarks:

"To some it will appear to favor the theory which attributes the existence of the Third degree to a disjunction and a re-arrangement of the parts of which the Second was originally composed."

We believe that when the Second degree was arranged, the secrets, the ritual, and instructions formerly comprised in the simple ceremony given to the whole Craft, equally, to Apprentices, to Fellows, and to Masters alike, were divided between the two degrees which were then formed, with certain new additions; and that later when the Third degree was invented, there was a further separation and a portion of the "part of a Fellow-Craft" was, with many new items, transferred to that of the Master.

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